

Britain urges Israel to return all evictees

LONDON (R) — The British government urged Israel Wednesday to comply fully with a United Nations demand for the return of all the Palestinians expelled last month but stopped short of calling for enforcement measures. "We voted for Security Council Resolution 799. We think the Israelis should comply fully with it," the Foreign Office said. But a spokesman added that a new mandatory U.N. resolution, which Arab states want to include sanctions to force Israeli compliance, would "not be helpful at this stage." A Foreign Office spokesman welcomed Israel's offer to allow 100 Palestinians to return and limit the term of exile to one year for the remainder as a "sizeable step towards compliance." But he added: "We hope they will build on this. A mandatory resolution would not be helpful at this stage while moves towards compliance are taking place." He did not elaborate. The Foreign Office said the main objective in trying to resolve the impasse over the Palestinian evictees was to ensure the early resumption of Arab-Israeli peace talks, which have been suspended since December.

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Sudan to airlift workers in Iraq

BAGHDAD (R) — The Sudanese government is planning to airlift home thousands of Sudanese workers who stayed in Iraq through the Gulf war but now see better prospects at home. It is arranging an initial flight later this month from Jordan — the first since last June, the Sudanese ambassador to Iraq told Reuters. "We feel that work opportunities here are less than they used to be and the prospects for quick economic recovery here are not that high," Youssef Mukhtar Yousef said. "Now they have better opportunities in Sudan than they have here. We need them. We are encouraging them to go." So far 840 labourers and service workers who have sunk into lonely poverty since the Gulf war have signed up for the government-paid Sudan Airways flight to Khartoum. At least several thousand of the 20,000 to 25,000 Sudanese left in Iraq are expected to go. Before the war Iraq had 400,000 Sudanese, an army of single male labourers fleeing famine and political turmoil at home. They were one of the biggest foreign communities. Many left during the Gulf crisis in 1990 and 1991 but others stayed on, deterred by conditions at home and reassured by good relations between Baghdad and Khartoum.

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Turkey may reopen embassy in Baghdad

ANKARA (R) — Turkey plans to base a diplomat in Baghdad for the first time since the start of the Gulf war in January 1991, a Foreign Ministry source said Wednesday. The source said Sadi Calislar had been chosen as charge d'affaires but it would be up to government to decide exactly when he would take up his post in the Iraqi capital. The government decided to June to reactivate the embassy but then postponed any action — to the relief of its Western allies, which feared Iraq would portray any such move as a crack in the Gulf war coalition. "The allies are still not very happy. They say (Iraq) will use this for propaganda purposes," the source said. But he said the government had shown it was not breaking ranks with the coalition by allowing Turkish-based Western warplanes to hit targets in northern Iraq last month.

UAE names members of federal council

ABU DHABI (R) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) Wednesday named the members of a revived federal national council, a kind of appointed senate with representatives from each of the seven emirates in the federation. UAE President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan issued a federal decree naming the 40 council members, mostly businessmen and community leaders appointed by the rulers of the emirates. The council contains 27 new members. The UAE cabinet last month approved a decree reviving the council, bringing the UAE into line with other Gulf Arab states which have appointed councils to advise their rulers and widen representation. The council, which was set up in 1972, is due to reopen on Saturday. It last met in July 1991. The long gap was widely attributed to delays by member emirates in appointing their representatives. Abo Dhabi and Dubai, the two biggest emirates, appoint eight members each, Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah name six each while Ajman, Fujairah and Umm Al Quwain have four seats each.

OIC condemns Israeli proposal

DUBAI (R) — The Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Wednesday condemned Israel's offer to allow back 100 expelled Palestinians, saying it aimed at circumventing a U.N. demand for the return of all 400 expelled. "The decision authorising the return of only 100 (expellees) and maintaining 300 other Palestinian citizens in enforced exile reflects the persistent will of the Israeli government to defy the international community," OIC President Hamid Al Ghabid said in a statement. Mr. Ghabid, president of the 51-nation OIC, called on the United Nations to adopt "all necessary measures" to make Israel comply with Security Council Resolution 799.

Pope slams pushing of Islamic law

COTONOU, Benin (R) — Pope John Paul started an eight-day visit to Africa by criticising predominantly Muslim countries which try to impose Islamic law on people of other religions. "The role of church, the Holy See and the bishops is to remind leaders of Muslim countries that Islamic law can be applied only to Muslim faithful," the Pope told reporters. "You absolutely cannot impose this law on those of other faiths, who are Christians," he said. The Pope's tour takes him to Sudan, which is run by a fundamentalist government the Vatican accuses of forcing Islamic law on its Christian and animist minority.

Italians seize Somali arms cache

MOGADISHU (R) — Italian troops searching a village north of Mogadishu Tuesday found artillery and anti-aircraft guns hidden in peasant huts, an Italian military spokesman said. Lieutenant Colonel Salvatore Iacono said the Italian troops made a big sweep in the area of Gohar, 80 kilometres inland from the capital, the main road to the famine-stricken area of Belet-Uen. They found two artillery pieces, 60 flees and an anti-aircraft machinegun.

U.S. welcomes Iraqi change in 'no-fly' zones

Arafat says some Arab states want better ties with Baghdad

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States has welcomed Iraq's recent halt in challenges to two allied "no-fly" zones over the country, but did not signal any change in the Bill Clinton administration's hardline policy towards Baghdad.

"The Iraqis have changed their behaviour," Defence Department spokesman Bob Hall told reporters. "We certainly think it's the right thing for them to do."

Iraq has been using the new Clinton administration to try to break out of its isolation after the Gulf war, which destroyed much of its military might. Last month Baghdad declared a unilateral ceasefire as a goodwill gesture to President Bill Clinton.

Mr. Hall said in response to questions that Iraq had not used target-acquisition radars or fired on U.S. and allied planes policing "no-fly" zones over northern and southern Iraq since Jan. 23, when a U.S. jet dropped bombs on a suspected anti-aircraft gun site in the southern zone.

"There has been no radar that has threatened allied aircraft," said Mr. Hall, adding that no Iraqi warplanes had challenged the zones set up by the Western

powers. "What has changed here is the Iraqi behaviour," he stressed when pressed on whether Mr. Clinton might be softening his demand that President Saddam Hussein comply with U.N. Gulf war ceasefire agreements.

Mr. Hall said that Iraq was still not in compliance with U.N. resolutions after the 1991 Gulf war and had not yet destroyed all of its weapons of mass destruction. He said Iraq was still moving anti-aircraft missiles within the no-fly zones despite allied warnings, but would not say whether such movements were a threat to allied planes.

The Washington Post reported from Baghdad Tuesday that a senior Iraqi official said Iraq had ordered all surveillance radar shut down after a series of Western air attacks in January on radars, anti-aircraft missiles and other military targets by Western warplanes in the "no-fly" zones.

Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said Sunday that Baghdad had gone a long way towards meeting U.N. resolutions and wanted "normal relations" and cooperation with its Gulf war foes.

Mr. Aziz, speaking in a British television interview from Baghdad, also said his country had no intentions of launching any fresh attack on Kuwait, but would not say whether President Saddam has renounced all claim to the emirate.

Iraq has made repeated political overtures to Mr. Clinton about improving relations after Washington and its British and French allies launched recent air strikes, accusing Iraq of flouting Gulf war ceasefire terms.

In Algiers, Iraq's vice-president said the Clinton administration had yet to give any clear sign of a change of policy towards his country.

Taha Yassin Ramadan told a news conference that Iraq was ready "to open a new page and normalise relations with every one."

Winding up a two-day visit to Algeria, Mr. Ramadan said: "Up to now, even if it is only a short time, we cannot say the intentions of the new (U.S.) administration are positive or negative."

"There is nothing on the U.S. side which makes us doubt the

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Rabin: Israel has right to expel hundreds more of Palestinians

TEL AVIV (R) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said Wednesday Israel retained the right to expel hundreds more Palestinians under a U.S.-brokered offer to allow 100 to return from South Lebanon.

"The principle of our ability to remove for a limited time hundreds of inciters, leaders, organisers remains," he told a stormy session of parliament.

His remarks were likely to reinforce Palestinian rejection of peace talks — which Washington is anxious to resume — until all the Palestinians he expelled and dumped in South Lebanon six weeks ago were allowed to return to their occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank homes.

Mr. Rabin, who agreed under U.S. pressure Monday to let 100 of the remaining 396 return and shorten exile terms for the rest to avert the threat of unprecedented U.N. sanctions, said he still believed he was right to expel them on Dec. 17.

"I believe this decision was a correct one, an exceptional decision that in the last 20 years no

government in Israel dared take," Mr. Rabin said.

Heckling from both right and left members of the Knesset interrupted his first statement in parliament since giving ground on the evictees.

Under Mr. Rabin's December order, 415 bound and blindfolded men were dumped over the Lebanese border in reprisal for the killing of six Israeli soldiers by Islamic fundamentalists. They were to be kept out for periods up to two years.

The expulsions, condemned as a violation of international human rights law by the United Nations Security Council, were Israel's largest in peacetime.

Mr. Rabin's compromise offer has been fiercely rejected by the evictees and other Palestinians. But he said the U.S.-brokered plan "created a groundwork of understanding" that while Washington in principle remained opposed to the expulsions "it accepted this reality, and in unprecedented dimensions."

The new Clinton administration sought a compromise on the

crisis to head off Security Council sanctions against Israel and to restart peace talks. Until expulsions threw the whole negotiating process into doubt, a fresh round had been expected at the beginning of this month.

Mr. Rabin's comments came hours after Foreign Minister Shimon Peres urged Washington to press all Arabs to resume Middle East peace talks. He said Palestinian participation was vital.

"In my opinion all have to come to the next round. Otherwise it will be not a little mess regarding the peace talks," Mr. Peres said. Syria, Lebanon and Jordan are involved as well as the Palestinians.

"It is possible to begin negotiations only with the Syrians but there is doubt the Syrians would come in any event without anyone else."

A senior Palestinian negotiator, Saeb Erekat, said Palestinians had told the United States they could not resume talks until all the evictees were brought home.

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U.N. condemns rebels for looting Sudan food aid

NAIROBI (R) — The United Nations condemned Sudanese rebels Wednesday for looting barges in a U.N. relief convoy taking food to famine victims in war-torn southern Sudan.

A U.N. statement obtained by Reuters said the looting violated an agreement under which the world body would carry humanitarian food unhindered to the south.

Per Janvid, special coordinator for U.N. emergency operations in Sudan, said in the statement that he "strongly condemns this incident, which violates the agreement."

"(It) greatly reduces the U.N.'s capacity to deliver urgently needed humanitarian assistance to other areas of extreme need along the Nile corridor," Mr. Janvid added.

The incident could bode ill for other food relief convoys despite agreements that try to ensure safe passage down the Nile to rebel-besieged Juba, whose population of 400,000 is in severe need of food aid, relief workers said.

Rebels under Magwek Gai, a commander of the Nasir faction of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), raided the U.N. river convoy taking supplies to

the southern capital Juba on Jan. 17 and stole 1,304 tonnes of food, a U.N. spokesman said.

Some barges carrying a further 1,096 tonnes of food were released and the Nasir faction, a splinter group of the main anti-government SPLA, apologised and said it had ordered Mr. Magwek to return the food, the spokesman added.

Relief sources said U.N. officials Friday flew to the remote town of Ganyiel where the barges were looted and the looters told them two thirds of the booty had already been given to starving people but that they would return the remaining third.

But Mr. Janvid's statement said when a U.N. steamer arrived in the Ganyiel area on Tuesday it found "the entire quantity of 1,304 tonnes of food had been offloaded on the authority of the local commander."

Mr. Janvid has demanded the food back, but U.N. officials said it had already been given out to some 20,000 people who were "in pretty bad need" around Ganyiel.

Relief sources said Riak

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Ibrahimi replaced

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria replaced veteran Foreign Minister Lakhdar Ibrahimi Monday with Redha Malek, a member of the collective presidency, the presidency announced.

Mr. Malek, an information minister in the 1970s under President Houari Boumedienne, joined the five-man presidency last July.

He was brought in after Ali Kafi, an original member, was chosen to lead it after the assassination of Head of State Mohammed Boudiaf.

Mr. Malek, chosen last April as head of an unelected 60 member group set up to advise the presidency, was ambassador to Paris in the 1960s.

In the reshuffle, former junior minister in charge of commerce, Tahar Hamdi, is promoted to labour and social affairs minister. He replaces Maamar Benguerba.

Mustapha Magraoui was named to Mr. Hamdi's old job as junior minister for commerce.

The presidency statement, carried on the official news agency APS, said the reshuffle was carried out by Mr. Kafi on recommendations from Prime Minister Belaid Abdul Salam.



Iraqi President Saddam Hussein (left) Tuesday holds talks with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Baghdad (AFP photo)

Ghali: Rabin deal does not meet requirements of 799

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies)

Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has told American Jewish leaders he does not believe Israel's offer to let 100 expelled Palestinians return complies with Security Council requirements.

The U.N. chief's position throws the issue again into the lap of the Security Council, where some members are pressing to impose trade sanctions against Israel for refusing to repatriate the Palestinians. It also puts him on a collision course with Jewish leaders and the United States.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Monday he believes Israel's offer was consistent with Security Council requirements, and the Jewish leaders agree.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin announced Monday that 100 of the nearly 400 Palestinians could return immediately. But the evictees rejected the concession and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) said it would continue to press for U.N. sanctions against Israel and continue to boycott Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Meanwhile, Arab delegates continued lobbying for a Security Council meeting on the issue despite the U.S. urging that the council take no further action in view of the compromise agreed by Israel.

Dr. Ghali met Tuesday with an 11-member delegation from the Conference of Presidents of Ma-

for American Jewish Organisations to discuss the issue. Conference chairman Lester Pollack told reporters Dr. Ghali "has reservations about whether there is compliance" with the Security Council's Dec. 18 demand that all the expelled Palestinians be returned immediately.

According to Mr. Pollack, the U.N. chief based his assessment on Israel's refusal to take back all the Palestinians immediately. Dr. Ghali said the final decision on whether Israel had complied would be made by the Security Council.

Abmad Fawzi, the deputy U.N. spokesman, confirmed Mr. Pollack's account.

The Jewish leaders contended, however, that Israel had complied with Security Council demands and agreed with the United States the issue should not deter efforts to restart Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Meanwhile, Arab delegates continued lobbying for a Security Council meeting on the issue despite the U.S. urging that the council take no further action in view of the compromise agreed by Israel.

"The Arab group is pushing for a meeting of the Security Council," Egyptian U.N. envoy Nabil

Al Araby told reporters.

Arab diplomats agreed last week on a text imposing sanctions against Israel for failing to repatriate the evictees. They said they had now added a provision targeting trade preferences for Israeli exports.

No council meeting has yet been scheduled but members were holding informal consultations Wednesday on their heavy work programme for the coming month.

Mr. Christopher said Monday the council should take no further action on the expulsions after Israel agreed to the U.S.-brokered compromise.

A spokesman for the French U.N. mission declined to confirm reports that France was working on a resolution saying Israel's action, while a step in the right direction, did not fulfil the council's demand for the return of all the Palestinians.

The draft was said to contain no reference to sanctions but to ask Dr. Ghali to send an emissary on a four-day trip to Israel to try to secure its full compliance.

Arab delegates, meanwhile, said they had amended the sanctions resolution they agreed last

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Evictees say battle is over future expulsions

MARI AL Zohour, Lebanon (R)

The leader of nearly 400 Palestinian expellees, addressing his men in a blizzard Wednesday, said standing up to Israel now would force it to freeze any further expulsions.

"You are here between the rocks and under the snow to close the door forever to any other Israeli transfer of Palestinians from their homeland," Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi said after prayers near their tents in South Lebanon.

In driving snow and biting cold, he told the group of 396 Palestinians it was essential they snub Israel's offer to take back about 100 of them.

"The battle between us and Israel is about one point. It is about how long we stay here. It is about the legality of expulsions," Dr. Rantisi said.

Under U.S. pressure, Israeli

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin offered Monday to allow about 100 evictees within four days, to cut the time in exile for the rest to a maximum of one year and to permit helicopters to bring aid to the tent camp.

The men, linked by Israel to militant groups it said were responsible for attacks against its soldiers, were expelled on Dec. 17.

"If we agree to the deal, the conspiracy, we may be returned tomorrow but we will be defeated. If we stay here two years we will win. We must never dirty our hands by accepting this deal," Dr. Rantisi said.

Despite international condemnation, Israel's high court endorsed the largest expulsion of Arabs by the Jewish state in 25 years.

Dr. Rantisi earlier rejected a suggestion from Israeli Foreign



A Palestinian expellee gets water from melting snow in a makeshift camp in South Lebanon where nearly 400 Palestinians evicted from the occupied territories by Israel are stranded (AFP photo)

Minister Shimon Peres that the evictees might eventually agree to Mr. Rabin's offer.

"Peres is dreaming if he thinks our stand is not firm," he told Reuters. "Our position on the U.S.-Israeli plan is final."

The United States brokered Tuesday's deal in a bid to avert

Saddam advises Arafat to continue peace talks

BAGHDAD (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat said Wednesday Iraqi President Saddam Hussein had advised the Palestinians to press on with peace talks with Israel.

Mr. Arafat said he had briefed the Iraqi leader on the state of the Arab-Israeli peace talks during a meeting Tuesday — their first in over a year.

"We are now in 15 months (of talks) and nothing had been achieved but in spite of that he encouraged us to continue in our attempts to achieve real peace," Mr. Arafat told reporters.

Iraq has traditionally favoured Palestinian hardliners opposed to peace talks with Israel while at the same time maintaining good relations with mainstream groups like Mr. Arafat's Faiteh.

Mr. Arafat said President Saddam had also offered to donate \$50 million to cover the deficit of the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

"I can thank from my heart what he has (offered) for our people," Mr. Arafat told reporters at a Baghdad guest palace.

He said Iraq, which cannot export oil because of a U.N. embargo on trade, would raise the \$50 million by selling oil under U.N. supervision.

Mr. Arafat rejected an Israeli proposal to break a deadlock over Palestinian expellees and said that Washington had failed the Palestinians.

"I am sorry to say that some of my colleagues have received different offers even from the Israelis and it was better than what has been declared now," Mr. Arafat told Reuters.

He was referring to an Israeli plan announced Monday to take back 100 of the evictees expelled in December to Lebanon.

Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin also announced shortened expulsion terms for the remaining 396

(Continued on page 5)

Rockets pound Kabul as U.N. withdraws staff

KABUL (R) — Renegade guerrillas pounded Kabul with rockets Wednesday amid frantic efforts by various mediators to negotiate a peace between President Burhanuddin Rabbani and a maverick radical chief.

The United Nations said it had withdrawn international staff from the eastern city of Jalalabad and Kandahar in the south and suspended road travel a day after gunmen ambushed and killed three U.N. staff and a Dutch consultant.

Heavy rocket exchanges for the 16th day between government troops and fighters of the Shiite Hezb-e-Wahdat group now aligned with the fundamentalist Hezb-e-Islami party of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar cut off much of the south and west of the capital.

Hezb-e-Wahdat fighters were firing from positions in the abandoned Polish embassy and the

Russian embassy's cultural centre and the army retaliated from hilltop positions.

Government planes carried out three bombing raids on the headquarters of Mr. Hekmatyar at Charasyab to the southeast of Kabul and the Hezb responded with anti-aircraft guns, witnesses said. There were no reports of casualties.

The International Committee of the Red Cross said the fierce fighting prevented it reaching one of its former hospitals in the west to deliver much-needed diesel for its generators.

Residents of the area tried to reach their homes but were forced to turn back when they came under heavy machinegun fire.

"My three children are in my house and I want to fetch them," said resident Terag Mohammed. Bodies lying in the streets

could not be removed because of the intensity of the bombardment, another resident said.

Official Kabul Radio said 72 people were killed in fighting on Tuesday and hospitals reported 275 injured.

More than 2,500 people have been injured in the latest round of fighting in Kabul, but the exact numbers of dead were not known since few bodies are taken to hospitals.

Mr. Hekmatyar is fighting to oust Mr. Rabbani, saying the president elected by a nationwide assembly last December came to power by rigging the vote.

The Iranian ambassador, an injured diplomat and 13 other embassy staff flew to Tehran a day after the embassy was hit.

Pakistan evacuated non-essential embassy staff after a rocket damaged the building on

Tuesday. India flew most of its staffs back to Delhi after a security guard was killed by a rocket.

An influential Shiite clergyman, Ahmad Ali Jibraili, held talks with Mr. Hekmatyar in the afternoon and said the rebel leader had agreed to a ceasefire on condition Mr. Rabbani released all Hezb-e-Islami prisoners.

The Jibraili, who met Mr. Rabbani earlier, said he planned a second meeting with the president to discuss Mr. Hekmatyar's terms.

A second peace negotiator was due to meet Mr. Hekmatyar later.

In New York, U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali voiced shock Tuesday at the killings of the U.N. staff in Afghanistan and issued an urgent appeal to all sides to cease hostilities and resume peace talks.

Amnesty lambasts Israel, seeks Palestinians' release

GENEVA (Agencies) — Amnesty International has slammed Israel for its continued systematic torture of Palestinians in the occupied territories and a rise in the number of killings by its security forces last year.

The London-based group, in a speech to the U.N. Human Rights Commission, also called on Israel to allow the 396 expellees stranded in South Lebanon to return to face a fair trial.

"We deplore in particular the upsurge in the number of killings and the continued use of torture during 1992," Amnesty said. "During 1992, Palestinian detainees under interrogation by the Israeli authorities continued to be subjected to systematic torture or ill-treatment."

Israeli forces, including undercover police and army units, shot dead more than 120 Palestinians last year, according to Amnesty. Some were killed in "circumstances suggesting summary executions or other unjustifiable killings," it added.

Amnesty said three Palestinians died in detention and another shortly after release. Their interrogation reportedly included hooding, sleep deprivation and beatings, it said.

Regarding the 396 expellees, the human rights group said: "While noting the recent decision of the Israeli government to allow back 100 of the deportees, Amnesty International calls again on Israel to allow them all to go back."

"Those suspected of an offence should be charged and given a prompt and fair trial," it added. "Otherwise, they should be allowed to return freely to their homes in the occupied territories."

Following is the full text of the Amnesty address: DESPITE the opening of peace negotiations in October 1991, the human rights situation in the Arab territories occupied by Israel continues to be of grave concern to Amnesty International. We deplore in particular the upsurge in the number of killings and the continued use of torture during 1992. We also deplore the mass deportation of Palestinians to South Lebanon and the arbitrary detention there of many Lebanese.

During 1992, Israeli forces, including undercover police and army units, shot dead over 120 Palestinians. While some were shot during armed clashes, others were killed in circumstances suggesting summary executions or other unjustifiable killings. In some cases, medical help was not given or was hindered by Israeli forces. In March, Jamal Ghanem was playing in a football match in Tulkarem when four undercover police arrived on the pitch and shot him dead. An ambulance was reportedly not allowed to enter the football pitch. In May, Anton Al-Shumali was shot at point-blank range by one of two Border Policemen who stopped him unarmed on a road in Beit Sahur. The police then left him dying by the roadside. Last December alone, 23 Palestinians were killed, one-third aged 16 or below. Five years after the beginning of the intifada, we are still faced with images of Israeli soldiers using lethal force against stone-throwing children.

Amnesty International has repeatedly urged the Israeli Government to review the official guidelines on the use of firearms, to investigate thoroughly all allegations of human rights violations, and to bring to justice those responsible for such violations. Clearly the steps taken so far do not allay fears that the Israeli Government is, at best, not concerned when Palestinians are unlawfully killed by its forces.

During 1992, Palestinian detainees under interrogation by the Israeli authorities continued to be subjected to systematic torture or ill-treatment. Three Palestinians died in detention and another died shortly after release. Their interrogation reportedly included hooding, sleep deprivation and beatings.

The Israeli authorities are currently reviewing their official interrogation guidelines. Amnesty International urges again that these guidelines be brought into line with the international prohibition of torture and ill-treatment. We also call on the Israeli authorities to bring to justice anyone found responsible for the torture or ill-treatment of prisoners, including in connection with the deaths of these four Palestinians.

When the government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin took office in July 1992, Amnesty International was encouraged by several initiatives. These included the review of legislation banning peaceful contacts with organizations like the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). We welcome the repeal by the Knesset in January of such legislation, as this was used to hold prisoners of conscience.

Amnesty International was also encouraged by the cancellation in August of deportation orders against 11 Palestinians. We were therefore shocked when the government last December changed relevant legislation in a matter of hours and deported over 400 Palestinians to South Lebanon. Among them were 16 whom the Israeli authorities later admitted had been deported "by mistake." Today 396 men remain stranded in South Lebanon in a makeshift camp in harsh conditions.

While noting the recent decision of the Israeli Government to allow back 100 of the deportees, Amnesty International calls again on Israel to allow them all to go back. Those suspected of an offence should be charged and given a prompt and fair trial. Otherwise, they should be allowed to return freely to their homes in the occupied territories.

The international attention on the Palestinian deportees should extend to other victims of human rights violations in South Lebanon. Some 200 detainees are held in the Khiam detention centre in the Israeli-declared "security zone." In May 1992, Amnesty International published a report describing torture during interrogation of men and women in Khiam with methods including severe beatings and electric shocks to fingers, tongues, genitals and nipples. Detainees in Khiam are held outside any legal framework without access to families or humanitarian organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Although the Khiam detention centre is run by the South Lebanon Army (SLA), it is under Israeli military control. Evidence indicates that Israeli officials have been directly involved in interrogation and torture in Khiam, at least until 1988. Israeli and SLA officials have repeatedly offered to release the detainees held in Khiam, as well as at least 20 other Lebanese held in Israel, in exchange for the release of, or for information about, four Israeli soldiers and a number of SLA members still missing in Lebanon.

Amnesty International believes that the Israeli government cannot disclaim responsibility for the treatment and fate of the detainees in Khiam. Israel should clarify the legal situation of these detainees. We are aware that many may have been involved in violence against Israel and the SLA. However, if they are held exclusively to compel those holding Israeli soldiers or SLA members to release them, or to provide information about them, they can only be regarded as hostages, and should therefore be released immediately and unconditionally. In any case they should be protected from torture and ill-treatment and allowed visits by families and the ICRC.

Amnesty International is also concerned about the fate of the missing Israeli soldiers and SLA members. If they are still alive and held as hostages, they too should be released immediately and unconditionally. They too should be protected from torture and ill-treatment and allowed visits by families and the ICRC.

During 1992, Palestinians — members of armed groups and others — killed 19 Israeli civilians. They also killed over 200 Palestinians, many of them suspected of "collaborating" with the Israeli authorities. Some were interrogated and tortured before being put to death. Palestinian leaders have condemned the torture and wanton killing of suspected "collaborators" including by issuing charters setting out rules of behaviour in the occupied territories. However, Palestinian leaders seem generally to have endorsed the view that "collaborators" may be punished with death if such punishment is approved by the top leadership.

Amnesty International continues to urge the PLO and the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) to do all in their power to prevent attacks on Israeli civilians and to prevent the torture and arbitrary killing of alleged Palestinian "collaborators." Last December we condemned the taking as a hostage and subsequent killing by Hamas of Border Policeman Nissim Toledano. Hostage-taking and such killings of prisoners, as well as torture and attacks on defenceless civilians, are contrary to the most basic principles of humanitarian law.

Amnesty International takes no position on political conflicts or on the legitimacy of resorting to arms in pursuit of political aims. However, human rights violations and abuses are indefensible and do not further the search for justice and peace. Amnesty International calls on all governments and opposition groups involved in the Arab/Israeli conflict to respect human rights and basic humanitarian standards.

We note that this Commission has frequently condemned human rights violations by Israel — indeed more often and more strongly than violations by many other countries. Yet, serious violations continue to be committed by the Israeli authorities.

The Middle East peace talks are at a difficult stage. Amnesty International firmly believes that unless the international community finds the political will to ensure universal respect for human rights, justice and peace will remain elusive. In the Israeli-occupied territories as elsewhere.

to justice those responsible for such violations. Clearly the steps taken so far do not allay fears that the Israeli Government is, at best, not concerned when Palestinians are unlawfully killed by its forces.

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Amnesty International was also encouraged by the cancellation in August of deportation orders against 11 Palestinians. We were therefore shocked when the government last December changed relevant legislation in a matter of hours and deported over 400 Palestinians to South Lebanon. Among them were 16 whom the Israeli authorities later admitted had been deported "by mistake." Today 396 men remain stranded in South Lebanon in a makeshift camp in harsh conditions.

While noting the recent decision of the Israeli Government to allow back 100 of the deportees, Amnesty International calls again on Israel to allow them all to go back. Those suspected of an offence should be charged and given a prompt and fair trial. Otherwise, they should be allowed to return freely to their homes in the occupied territories.

The international attention on the Palestinian deportees should extend to other victims of human rights violations in South Lebanon. Some 200 detainees are held in the Khiam detention centre in the Israeli-declared "security zone." In May 1992, Amnesty International published a report describing torture during interrogation of men and women in Khiam with methods including severe beatings and electric shocks to fingers, tongues, genitals and nipples. Detainees in Khiam are held outside any legal framework without access to families or humanitarian organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Although the Khiam detention centre is run by the South Lebanon Army (SLA), it is under Israeli military control. Evidence indicates that Israeli officials have been directly involved in interrogation and torture in Khiam, at least until 1988. Israeli and SLA officials have repeatedly offered to release the detainees held in Khiam, as well as at least 20 other Lebanese held in Israel, in exchange for the release of, or for information about, four Israeli soldiers and a number of SLA members still missing in Lebanon.

Amnesty International believes that the Israeli government cannot disclaim responsibility for the treatment and fate of the detainees in Khiam. Israel should clarify the legal situation of these detainees. We are aware that many may have been involved in violence against Israel and the SLA. However, if they are held exclusively to compel those holding Israeli soldiers or SLA members to release them, or to provide information about them, they can only be regarded as hostages, and should therefore be released immediately and unconditionally. In any case they should be protected from torture and ill-treatment and allowed visits by families and the ICRC.

Amnesty International is also concerned about the fate of the missing Israeli soldiers and SLA members. If they are still alive and held as hostages, they too should be released immediately and unconditionally. They too should be protected from torture and ill-treatment and allowed visits by families and the ICRC.

During 1992, Palestinians — members of armed groups and others — killed 19 Israeli civilians. They also killed over 200 Palestinians, many of them suspected of "collaborating" with the Israeli authorities. Some were interrogated and tortured before being put to death. Palestinian leaders have condemned the torture and wanton killing of suspected "collaborators" including by issuing charters setting out rules of behaviour in the occupied territories. However, Palestinian leaders seem generally to have endorsed the view that "collaborators" may be punished with death if such punishment is approved by the top leadership.

Amnesty International continues to urge the PLO and the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) to do all in their power to prevent attacks on Israeli civilians and to prevent the torture and arbitrary killing of alleged Palestinian "collaborators." Last December we condemned the taking as a hostage and subsequent killing by Hamas of Border Policeman Nissim Toledano. Hostage-taking and such killings of prisoners, as well as torture and attacks on defenceless civilians, are contrary to the most basic principles of humanitarian law.

Amnesty International takes no position on political conflicts or on the legitimacy of resorting to arms in pursuit of political aims. However, human rights violations and abuses are indefensible and do not further the search for justice and peace. Amnesty International calls on all governments and opposition groups involved in the Arab/Israeli conflict to respect human rights and basic humanitarian standards.

We note that this Commission has frequently condemned human rights violations by Israel — indeed more often and more strongly than violations by many other countries. Yet, serious violations continue to be committed by the Israeli authorities.

The Middle East peace talks are at a difficult stage. Amnesty International firmly believes that unless the international community finds the political will to ensure universal respect for human rights, justice and peace will remain elusive. In the Israeli-occupied territories as elsewhere.

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Arab-American Mohammad Salah (centre) of Chicago is led out of a Ramallah military court Tuesday after he was remanded in custody for another two weeks. Mr. Salah and another Arab-American, Mohammad Jarad, were arrested by

Israeli security forces last week and accused of financing and rebuilding the Hamas group, which suffered a setback with Israel's Dec. 17 expulsion of 400 Palestinians suspected of belonging to Hamas and another group, Islamic Jihad (AFP photo)

ADC urges release of Arab-Americans

AMMAN (J.T.) — The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) has condemned the Israeli arrest without charge and detention of two Palestinian-Americans, Mohammad Jarad and Mohammad Salah, as illegal and politically motivated to invoke fear about Arabs and Muslims.

A press release issued by the ADC said the organization was contacted last week by Amal Jarad, wife of Mr. Jarad, to assist in her husband's case. Mr. Jarad, a Chicago businessman, travelled to the West Bank to settle the legal affairs of his late father. As the only son he is also responsible for the care and support of his mother and grandmother, the ADC said.

Mr. Salah and Mr. Jarad were arrested without a warrant by Israeli forces and have been held without charges or the ability to see lawyers, family members or physicians.

"We have long known about the Israel system of persecution of the Palestinian population," ADC President Albert Mokhiber said. Now, even Arab-Americans carrying U.S. passports are unsafe as they have become subjected to these individual forms of discrimination by Israel. How can a nation which claims to be a democracy have one set of rules for Muslims and Christians and another more equitable set for Jews?

Mr. Mokhiber continued, "American taxpayers should not be obliged to underwrite Israeli Apartheid. We have called upon our government to secure their immediate release and to assure that due process is afforded all Americans regardless of the religion or national origin as is required in the U.S.-Israeli Treaty of Friendship, Navigation and Commerce."

Mrs. Jarad in a humanitarian appeal to Washington stated, "I appeal to our government to do everything possible to release my husband. My children and I miss him very much and need him home with us. I want to stress the fact that my husband was never involved politically or otherwise with organizations overseas and we deny all the Israeli allegations as propaganda."

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MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Kuwait to allow retired officers to testify

DUBAI (R) — Kuwait's defence minister was quoted Wednesday as saying he will allow retired military personnel to testify at a parliamentary probe into Iraq's 1990 invasion. But Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah said current members of the armed forces will need ministry approval. The United Arab Emirates newspaper Al Khaleej said the minister made his comments in an interview. "The defence minister said the decision will allow retired military personnel to testify without ministry approval but he said serving personnel will need ministry permission if they are called to testify," the newspaper said. Parliament wants the right to summon members of the armed forces to appear before a fact-finding committee and be interviewed about their role during the invasion. The defence minister had said it would be illegal for any member of the armed forces to give any information without ministry permission. The committee has interviewed Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Sabah, defence minister at the time of the invasion, but two senior officers have not responded to a summons. If it finds evidence of serious wrongdoing, the committee can turn itself into an investigative body with the authority to recommend prosecutions.

Illegal immigrants caught heading for France

ALGIERS (R) — Algerian police have arrested 15 foreigners about to take a boat to the French port of Marseilles with false papers, the official news agency APS said Tuesday. The would-be immigrants, all from African countries, were arrested in several operations, indicating a network operating from neighbouring countries for illegal emigrants, police said. The foreigners were arrested in Bejaia, a coastal town some 180 kilometres east of Algiers.

Home News

Snow disrupts Kingdom, but authorities respond quickly

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN (J.T.) — For a second day snow conditions have disrupted normal activities in many parts of Jordan, as schools and universities remained closed, and only skeleton staffs were reported on duty in many government departments.

The snow, which began falling Tuesday on areas rising 700 metres above sea level, continued Wednesday in most regions 600 metres high, and is expected to continue until Thursday noon, according to the Department of Meteorology.

A department statement said low depression centred over northeast Syria affected Jordan after midnight Tuesday, bringing more snow and a further drop in temperatures.

An improvement in the weather conditions can be expected, but temperatures will remain low, the statement said.

Despite the snow, Royal Jordanian (RJ) operated its scheduled flights Wednesday, but was forced to make some adjustments and delay the morning flights until noon, RJ Public Relations Director Munib Toukan said.

Mr. Toukan told the Jordan Times that the Amman-Rome and Amman-London flights were combined as were the Amman-Tunis, Amman-Casablanca and the Amman-Amsterdam New York flights.

He said the stormy conditions in Syria forced the cancellation of RJ's flight to Damascus, Wednesday, but passengers could be flown there Thursday.

Reports from other parts of the country said major and side roads in the mountain areas were blocked by snow, and government road-clearing equipment was hard at work Tuesday and Wednesday.

The Public Security Department (PSD) announced that the main Ras Nagab road between Amman and Aqaba was blocked several times and was being cleared by the Public Works Department.

Several roads in the Karak, Tafleh and Maan areas were also reported closed.

The Northern Kufunje-Jordan Valley road suffered a landslide, and the Public Works Department was dealing with the situation.

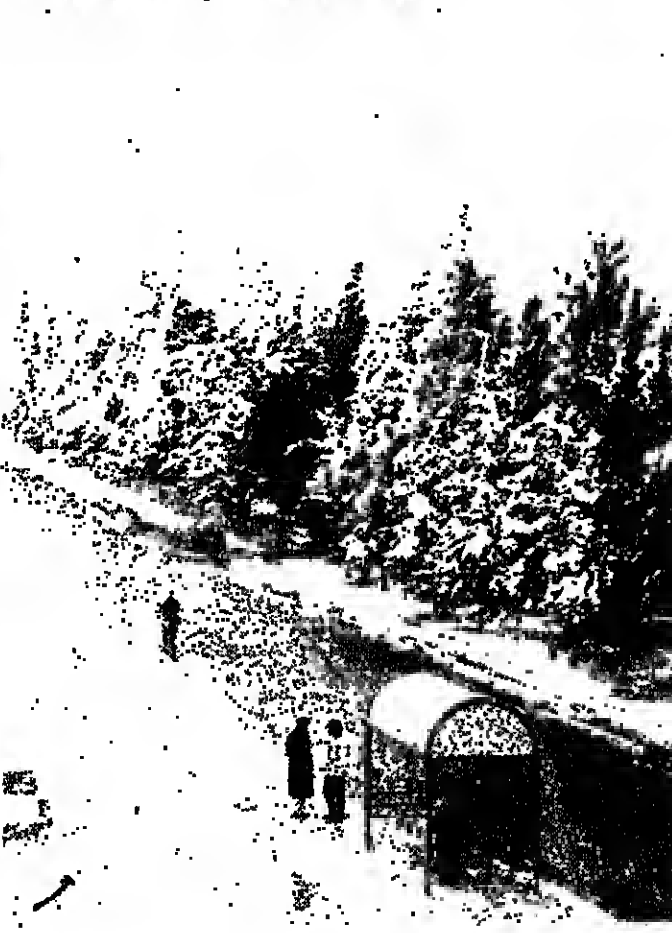
In the Jerash region most of the roads were blocked.

Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzak Tabeishat said he was in constant touch by telephone with heads of the municipal councils in mountain towns and villages.

He said he had instructed ministry-affiliated departments in these areas to give priority to road opening operations.



Motorist pushes through a flooded Amman street Wednesday (above) as campus life was almost halted under a snowy blanket (Photo by Yusef Al 'Allan)



Chamber of Commerce opposes sales tax plan

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The "sales tax" has been a hotly debated subject among Jordanians for quite a while, but it seems the discussions have not resulted in a clear understanding of the purpose of the tax and its effects once implemented.

The commercial and industrial sectors have been leading opponents of the sales tax which was formulated by the Ministry of Finance and passed by the Council Ministers.

The proposed tax will be debated in Parliament soon.

In its latest attacks, the commercial sector blasted the tax proposal as "self-destructive" and said that the tax will "hampers production."

Mohammad Asfour, chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce (FJCC), said at a recent press conference that the commercial sector rejected the implementation of the sales tax, especially at this crucial time.

Mr. Asfour said the sales tax was an introductory stage that

would finally lead to the implementation of a value-added tax (VAT).

He said the implementation of the sales tax poses considerable difficulties as it requires businesses to provide financial records: a task which he said is beyond the capabilities of small industrialists and merchants. The commerce chief said small-scale production entities, merchants and service institutions were not accustomed to keep sufficient and reliable records of their financial dealings such as sales, purchases, wages paid as well as other expenses or earnings.

Mr. Asfour said many economists have concluded that the implementation of this tax in most developing countries has turned out to be useless as these countries lacked the financial systems and staff capable of efficiently collecting taxes.

He also listed what he sees as additional negative aspects of the sales tax. They are, he said:

— The application of the sales tax on the basis of multiple tax rates would exacerbate the complexity of implementing the tax compared to a unified tax rate.



Mohammad Asfour

— The capability of transferring the indirect tax burden to the "buyer," because the person legally responsible for paying the tax is not the "seller" but the buyer.

— Imposing a sales tax on goods and services with inflexible prices would affect low-income people more than those of higher income.

— The imposition of the sales tax would lead to a general rise in the price level and higher inflation.

Advocates of the sales tax claim it will reduce the imbalance of trade and consumption as it is more comprehensive than other indirect taxes, and it can be imposed according to rates which are more consistent and unified.

However, Mr. Asfour said, "this claim will be accurate only if this tax has a unified rate."

Proponents of the tax further argue that it will facilitate the prospects for moving toward indirect instead of direct taxes.

In addition, the advocates claim that the sales tax would provide better potentials than indirect taxes, and that it would reduce the volume of tax evasion.

Another reason some say they favour the sales tax is that the statistical auditing of the data pertaining to the sectorial value-added tax would be made easier.

the first place?

Mr. Asfour questioned the current taxation system and asked if it was consistent with the current economic conditions and developments, and whether it was playing its role in light of the economic policy in terms of essence and trends.

Mr. Asfour said that according to the draft law and as demonstrated by the government, the sales tax had two perspectives:

1. The sales tax is a neutral tax. 2. The sales tax will be a substitute for other taxes.

However, he stressed that implementing the sales tax via any avenue other than that of tax reform would not be acceptable. Moreover, he said, the process of tax reform cannot be achieved by imposing a sales tax which poses a substitute for an already existing tax.

Jordan seeks single criteria in U.N. rules

GENEVA (Petra) — Jordan has urged the United Nations to adopt a single criteria in its dealings with world issues including those of the Middle East and to force Israel to implement U.N. resolutions.

Jordan's call was expressed by its permanent ambassador to the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, Sharif Fawaz Sharaf.

Sharif Fawaz said Israel's tactics in delaying the implementation of U.N. resolutions is an effort to buy time and diverting world public opinion from the real situation in the Israeli occupied territories.

Israel is doing all in its power to abort the peace process at a time when the Arab parties are showing increased tendency towards peace, said Sharif Fawaz in an address to the International Human Rights Committee meeting in Geneva to discuss human rights violations in the occupied Arab lands.

By expelling more than 400 Palestinians, Israel has flagrantly violated international laws and principles.

By offering to return only 100 expellees is simply a way to cir-



Sharif Fawaz Sharaf

cumvent U.N. Resolution 799, the Jordanian envoy said.

It is unreasonable to accept the idea of Israel holding negotiations with the Arab parties on the basis of U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 at a time when it refuses to implement Resolution 799 on the repatriation of the 400 expellees, Sharif Fawaz said.

This is a mere manoeuvre on the part of Israel who has long usurped Palestinian lands, and refuses to recognise the Palestinian people's rights, he added.

Philippine embassy to shut down after 13 years in the Kingdom

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The embassy of the Philippines in Amman will be closed soon as part of cost-cutting measures adopted by the new government of President Fidel Ramos.

Ambassador Pacifico Castro, who has been serving as ambassador to Jordan since August 1989, will be leaving for Manila next week for consultations with the government on the closure and the means through which Manila would maintain its diplomatic presence in Jordan, Consul Walter Salmingo said in Amman.

"We have received information from Manila, but it is not very clear," Mr. Salmingo told the Jordan Times. "We are seeking full information from Manila."

A Foreign Ministry statement issued in Manila and carried by news agencies said the government was closing down nine of the 60 Philippine embassies and three consulates.

Apart from the mission in Jordan, the country's embassies in Senegal, Morocco, Romania, Poland, Sri Lanka, Cuba, Peru and Micronesia would be closed; in

addition, Philippine consulates in Seattle, Houston and San Diego in the U.S. would cease to function.

Consul Salmingo said the details of continued Philippine diplomatic presence whether through an interest section at any other embassy in Amman or otherwise—could be known only after Foreign Secretary Roberto Romulo returns to Manila after a trip later this month.

The Philippines opened its embassy in Amman in 1980 when the country's nationals in the Kingdom totalled around 10,000.

Mr. Salmingo estimated that around 1,000 Philippine nationals now live in Jordan. He noted that close to 5,000 Filipinos and Filipinas were in the Kingdom prior to the Gulf crisis of 1990.

The current staff strength at the embassy is four diplomats, including the ambassador, and six support personnel, including two Jordanians, the consul said.

In addition to Jordan, the embassy in Amman covered Syria and Lebanon, with a total Philippine expatriate community of 6,500, including those in Jordan.

The Philippines maintains embassies in Iraq and Egypt in



Pacifico Castro

addition to all the Gulf countries and an honorary consulate in Cyprus.

The highlight of Ambassador Castro's tenure in Jordan, by his own admission, came during the Gulf crisis when he had to supervise the evacuation of about 25,000 of his compatriots leaving Kuwait and Iraq through Jordan.

Trade between Jordan and the Philippines is worth around \$3 million; Jordan exports phosphates, potash and cement valued at about \$2.5 million, and the Philippines accounts for the rest in exports of garments and canned food.

Ajloun's needy receive rehabilitation services

AJLOUN (Petra) — The Ajloun Social Development Department extended a total of JD 265,200 to 1,034 needy families in Ajloun as recurrent assistance during 1992, Department Director Mashari Al Irsha said.

Mr. Irsha said the department also paid JD 2,780 in emergency assistance to 30 needy families.

He said about JD 74,610 were paid to rehabilitate 72 cases in the Ajloun district, thus raising the number of vocational rehabilitation projects sponsored by the department to 72 projects.

Furthermore, Mr. Irsha added, the department also contributed to the physical rehabilitation of six cases.

During 1992, the department focused on supporting charitable societies and underlined the need to develop the concept of social

work, he said.

The number of charitable societies in the district, stands at 11 multi-purpose societies which extend aid to the needy and offer vocational training programmes, Mr. Irsha said.

These societies operate nine vocational training centres and 10 children's clubs, he added.

During 1992, the department will implement several income-generating projects in three villages in the district, Mr. Irsha reported.

The department director also said that the policy of the National Aid Fund (NAF) currently concentrates on establishing income-generating projects for the needy and granting assistance to the largest number of widows, old people and the disabled.

Evictees: Battle is over future moves

(Continued from page 1)

799 or there is no need for it or the U.N. to exist."

He was referring to Security Council Resolution 799, passed a day after the expulsions, calling for the immediate repatriation of all of the 415 Palestinians originally expelled.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Palestinian peace negotiators rejected the Israeli offer as a manoeuvre, but reaction from several Arab states was muted and European countries welcomed the proposal as a positive step.

Arab delegates continued pushing Tuesday for a Security Council session on the evictees, despite U.S. opposition.

France was reported to be

drafting a resolution saying the offer still did not fulfill demands for the return of all the Palestinians. It was said to contain no reference to sanctions.

"Such a resolution is rejected unless it takes the necessary measures to ensure Israel submits to the international community's will," said Dr. Rantisi, when asked about the draft.

Dr. Rantisi said he believed Arab partners to the Middle East peace talks would quit the negotiations, especially as the United States—a sponsor—was clearly backing Israel.

The PLO and Palestinian peace negotiators have promised to boycott the talks until all the expellees are allowed home.

Ghali: Rabin deal does not meet 799

(Continued from page 1)

week to include a ban on trade concessions or preferential measures for Israeli exports.

The draft retains a prohibition against dealings with Israeli commercial, industrial or public establishments involved in violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention in the Israeli-occupied territories. The convention covers the treatment of civilians in time of war.

The paragraph directed against Israeli exports would replace a

section of the original text calling for Israel's exclusion from any international conference dealing with human rights.

The substitute wording says: "All states shall cease to provide any trade concessions or preferential measures for Israeli exports, notwithstanding the existence of any rights or obligations conferred or imposed by any agreement or any contract entered into or any licence or permit."

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition entitled "Modernist Still Life Photographed" at the American Centre.
- ★ Medical book exhibition at Al Bashir Hospital.
- ★ Exhibition of watercolour paintings by Syrian artist Nazir Nab' at Baladana Art Gallery.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by Abed Bani Yassin and Nawaf Mandel at Deir Abee Saeed Girls' Secondary School.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Syrian artist Alfred Hattal at Al Balqa Art Gallery in Fuhis city.

ITALIAN FILM WEEK

- ★ English-subtitled Italian film entitled "Verso Sera" (Towards Evening) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8 p.m.

THEATRE

- ★ Shakespeare's play "A Midsummer Night's Dream" performed by the London Shakespeare Group at the Amman Plaza Hotel.

MUSICAL THEATRE

- ★ The 1957 musical play "The Pajama Game" at 5 p.m. at the American Centre (101 min.).

Jordan signs agreement as a most favoured nation in Islamic states trade

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

JEDDAH — Jordan has joined a preferential trade agreement adopted by the members of the 51-member Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC). In signing the treaty in Jeddah, Jordan became the 11th Islamic nation to do so.

Jordan's ambassador to Saudi Arabia and permanent envoy to the OIC, Naser Bataineh, signed the treaty Tuesday in the presence of OIC Secretary General Hamed Al Ghabed.

The OIC nations reached an agreement on this treaty in April 1991 in order to further facilitate trade among them by granting one another the so-called most-favoured-nation status in commercial affairs.

The signatories to the treaty are: Senegal, Turkey, Chad, Indonesia, Libya, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Guinea and Tunisia.

Founded in 1969, the OIC was

able to reach a general agreement among its members for economic, technical and commercial cooperation in 1981 providing for the establishment of joint investment projects and trade coordination.

This was followed by an agreement on promotion, protection and guarantee of investments among member states.

A plan of action to strengthen economic cooperation was adopted at the Third Islamic Summit Conference in 1981 to promote collective self-reliance and the development of joint ventures in all sectors.

At the signing ceremony, Dr. Ghadeb expressed the OIC's appreciation of Jordan's continued endeavour to promote commercial and economic cooperation among the OIC member nations.

He said he hoped that the other OIC members will follow suit and sign the treaty so that the next step aimed at promoting economic ties can begin.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King visits Army Headquarters

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein, the Supreme Commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces Wednesday visited the General Headquarters of the army. He was received by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Fathi Abu Taleh, the Chief of Staff of the Land Forces, the Chief of Staff of the Royal Air Force, the assistants of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Inspector General. King Hussein met with Field Marshal Abu Taleh and discussed issues of concern to the armed forces.

Crown Prince meets Russian delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday reaffirmed Jordan's eagerness to reach a peaceful settlement through the Middle East peace process. Addressing a visiting Russian delegation at his office, the Crown Prince said Jordan was looking forward to peaceful solutions to outstanding world problems. The delegation is led by Major General Andrei Nicolai, First Deputy of the Russian Armed Forces Chief of Staff. The two sides reviewed Jordanian-Russian relations.

Prince Abdullah visits Police Academy

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Ben Al Hussein visited Wednesday the Royal Police Academy where he was briefed on its activities. Prince Abdullah met with the academy's director and heads of departments and discussed training activities at the academy. Prince Abdullah expressed his satisfaction with the role of the academy in training local police.

1st Arab orthodontics meeting to be held

AMMAN (Petra) — The first Arab Orthodontics conference will be held in Amman on April 29. The two-day conference, organised by the Orthodontics Specialists Section at the Jordanian Dentists Association (JDA), will research and expertise among Arab specialists in the field. Secretary General of the conference Irfan Sultan said.

Labour federations meet in Amman

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation representing the General Secretariat of the Arab Federation of Workers in banks, insurance and financial institutions Wednesday visited the Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions (FJLU). The delegation met with the FJLU Secretary General and several of its leaders for talks on ways to develop cooperation between the Arab federation and the Jordanian labour unions. Participants in the meeting also discussed the current situation in the Arab region and problems facing the Arab labour force.

British travel books include Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The British Council library has published a list of the 1992 best-selling travel books. The 10 books listed include two books on Jordan; one is entitled "Jordan and Syria: Travel Survival Kit" and the other by Ian Browning, is about Petra.

Japanese team stages martial arts performance

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday attended a sports festival featuring Japanese traditional arts events staged by a visiting team of Japanese experts and Jordanians.

The festival, which was held at the Al Orthodox Club, was attended by the Japanese ambassador to Jordan.

The Crown Prince addressed the teams in the name of the Jordanian Higher Council for Martial Arts and expressed his appreciation of their skills.

The Crown Prince also thanked the Japanese government and the Al Orthodox Club for hosting the event.

PSD chief meets team

Public Security Department (PSD) Director General Fadel Ali Wednesday met with the visiting delegation of the Japanese traditional sports mission.

The 32-member delegation is here upon the invitation of the Jordanian Higher Council for Martial Arts (JHCMA), chaired by Crown Prince Hassan.

Major General Ali said the PSD was providing all possible facilities for police officers to train in the martial arts at all levels.

During their four-day stay in Amman and Irbid the Japanese team will present performances in judo, kendo, aikido and karate.

Following the meeting with the PSD chief, the team members were accompanied on visits to a number of PSD departments.

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Justice can't be divided

WASHINGTON'S blessing of the so-called Israeli compromise offer to return 100 Palestinian expellees is obviously aimed to end the standoff between Israel and the U.N. Security Council but it is also a clumsy attempt to put things right. It is one thing to bolster the Israeli Labour-led government under the leadership of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in order to save the anaemic peace process and quite another to prostitute Resolution 799 into something which is not. Granted all efforts should be made to restart the peace negotiations between the Arabs and Israel and create a favourable climate for their success. But if the ultimate objective of U.S. policy-makers is to attain positive conditions for the next round of bilateral and multi-lateral peace talks, the Americans should show more sensitivity towards the position of the Arab side especially the Palestinian offer to negotiate with Israel on the basis of Security Council Resolution 242. It was basically an American idea that the PLO recognise 242 and 338 as a prelude to opening a major dialogue with the organisation in efforts to solve the Palestinian problem in its entirety. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat has gone further than any other Arab leader in the post-Camp David accord era by offering to make a pilgrimage of peace to Israel and engage its leadership in a meaningful dialogue for peace. In spite of this offer, however, Israel, even under the moderate Labour-led coalition, still persists in rebuffing all Palestinian overtures exactly at a time when the Israelis well know that there is no escape from dealing with the Palestinian leadership. If Rabin's political bone of contention on the dispute over the expellees is that Hamas and the other Islamic organisations reject Resolution 242 at the same time they invoke Resolution 799, the least that one could expect from the Israelis is their recognition of the mainstream PLO which wants negotiations on the basis of all U.N. resolutions. The same could apply to the Palestinian evicting themselves, who also should be given the opportunity to pronounce themselves on those resolutions before Israel can make the hasty conclusion about their rejection of peace based on international law and legitimacy. To stop short of doing the right thing and urge instead partial implementation of 799 is not something that the new administration in Washington was expected to do.

From a strictly legal point of view, all Palestinians expelled in December of 1992 should be allowed to return home unconditionally. If Israel has a case against any of them, its judiciary should be given the opportunity to investigate and render judgement later. This is the way of the democratic world to which the U.S. supposedly is totally and unequivocally committed. President Bill Clinton was elected on a platform that, among other things championed human rights and freedoms for all peoples. His association with a partial redress of a basic human right obviously runs contrary to his political philosophy and does not augur well for a new American leadership of the world at large.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

ISRAEL'S DECISION to repatriate one quarter of the Palestinians it has expelled from northern Lebanon represents an unprecedented step on the part of the Jewish state, reflecting retreat from its intransigent position, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily. Some observers view this step as an indication that the Jewish state has finally realised, under pressure of course, that it can no longer ignore the will of the world community and turn its back to the U.N. resolutions, it added. These observers believe that acceptance of Resolution 799 will open the way for Israel to accept resolutions 242 and 338 and start respecting the world organisation and its various rules and principles so as to be accepted by the world community as part of it and not as an outlaw and murderer, the paper continued. Describing the Israeli change of heart as a first, feeble step along a long and difficult path, the paper said that nothing less than full compliance with the U.N. resolutions can bring about the aspired peace to the Middle East region. By succumbing to pressure and deciding to return 100 of the deported men to their homeland, Israel has taken a small step towards correcting its mistake, said the paper. It took tremendous pressure and influence to persuade the Israelis to comply with the resolution and stop ignoring the United Nations which Israel has disregarded ever since its creation, the paper pointed out.

OUT OF a total of 12 political parties which have already acquired legal status in Jordan only one came out different in form and content, said a columnist in Al Ra'i Wednesday. Noting that most of the legalised political parties are similar in name and political orientation, Sultan Al Hattab said that the Progress and Justice Party is different because it addresses social matters, in addition to political themes. The writer said that one of the most important questions facing the society in Jordan is the status of women, their activities and contributions to development. The Progress and Justice Party stands out differently because it tackles this question and tries to handle other social rather than political issues, the writer noted. He said that the other parties have opted to use general and not binding political terms, which look alike but fail to attract a popular base, compared to the Progress and Justice Party which is bound to have a better chance of success. The general and unspecified ideologies offered by the majority of these parties can be by no means attract any buyers since, the writer said, these ideas are remote from the real problems which the Jordanian society strives to solve.

Racism: Police in Europe guilty of human rights abuses

Following is a January 1993 Amnesty International report on the rising tide of racist violence in Europe and the grim echo it finds in the behaviour of the region's police forces.

According to the human rights organisation Amnesty International (AI), police in many western European countries — the very people who should be investigating and preventing racist violence — have taken part in bloody attacks and degrading treatment themselves.

"We know of people being badly beaten up, a 14-year-old asylum seeker having his arm broken, a motorcyclist being run down by a car and then beaten up by the driver — all assaulted not by racist organisations but by police officers," said Amnesty International.

"And to make things worse, it is pitifully rare for these officers to be brought to justice for their behaviour. And the responsibility for that must go to governments — by failing to punish their own agents for racist abuse, governments implicitly condone racist attacks in society at large."

AI is calling on governments to take firm action against torture and ill-treatment by police and other state agents and to ensure they do not behave in ways which appear to condone or encourage racist violence in society at large. The organisation is recommending western European authorities to make it clear that racist behaviour by police will not be tolerated — by, for example, introducing pre-employment screening of police officers for racist attitudes and further training, or if appropriate, dismissal of police officers who display racist attitudes.

In the United Kingdom, for example, victims of police ill-treatment have taken their cases to the civil courts, where in several recent cases tens of thousands



of pounds sterling have been paid out by the police — without ever admitting their liability.

In July 1991 the London Metropolitan police force paid £40,000 compensation to Leslie Burnett, a black landscape gardener. He had been arrested for allegedly tampering with a car and was severely beaten, kicked and called "a black bastard". The police paid — but did not accept responsibility for the attack.

Sadly, cases such as this are far from unusual. In country after country in western Europe,

police have been involved in ill-treatment and torture where the race of the victim appears to have been a factor, and all too frequently those responsible have not been brought to justice.

Austria: Mustafa Ali, an Austrian of Egyptian descent, and a friend are stopped by police for "jay-walking". They are the only non-Europeans among several pedestrians crossing the street and are subjected to racist insults.

When Mustafa Ali refuses to pay a fine, he is beaten up and arrested, in custody he is pushed

through a window and loses consciousness. Although he makes a formal complaint, a police conspiracy of silence prevents officers being prosecuted.

France 1991: Aissa Ithich, a French citizen of Moroccan parents, dies in a police cell of an asthma attack, after police reportedly beat him and refuse to allow him medication. A police doctor is charged with involuntary homicide, but no action has yet been taken against the officers who assaulted him.

Denmark 1990: Babading Fatty, a

Gambian tourist, and Himid Hassan Juma, a Tanzanian tourist, are allegedly beaten while in police custody. Their cases were included in a wider judicial investigation into allegations of ill-treatment and racist abuse of asylum-seekers in Copenhagen prisons.

Germany 1992: Among several reports of assaults on asylum-seekers by police, AI hears of a raid on a hostel in Gränitz, where

people are pulled from bed, beaten with batons and pushed. Allegations of ill-treatment are currently being investigated.

Portugal 1991: 19-year-old Luis Gravanita is stopped by police, taken to a police station, punched and kicked, and called "a worthless piece of Angolan shit". Luis Gravanita is white and a Portuguese citizen, but born in Angola. No news of any investigation has been received.

Spain 1991: Arab tourists Mohammad Hegazy and Rami Shibli are arrested and severely beaten after one of them spoke in Italian to a civil guard. They made a formal complaint, but it is not known whether any investigation has taken place.

Italy 1992: Daud Addawa Ali, a Somali asylum-seeker, is rushed to hospital after being beaten unconscious in police custody. The government claims he was involved in a violent struggle before his arrest but has failed to provide any further information.

Greece 1990: Selmus Utku, a Turkish Kurd, is tortured by Athens Anti-Narcotics police. As well as beating him, his captors burn his feet and genitals with a cigarette lighter. When a senior police officer asks his subordinates why, they reply: "He is a Turk." No disciplinary action has been taken against the officers involved.

These represent only a few illustrative cases of a grave problem which needs to be urgently addressed, said AI. "In the present climate, with racial attacks on the increase and racist groups growing in size, that failure to act is tantamount to condoning racist crimes in society at large."

"It is time for governments to act — time to stop these human rights abuses and bring those responsible to justice."

Sudanese Islamists set about creating new society

By John West
Reuters

KHARTOUM — Out of the world spotlight, in a country isolated politically and economically, Islamic visionaries have embarked on the task of building what they think is the ideal society.

Impoverished Sudan, Africa's largest country and a nation with a complex mix of races and religions, is the unlikely laboratory for this unlikely experiment.

The success or failure of the visionaries, led by the urbane and charismatic lawyer Hassan Al Tourabi, will probably have a profound effect on the long conflict between fundamentalist and secular forces in the Arab World, political analysts say.

Seen from the centre, Mr. Tourabi's office in Khartoum, the vision of an Islamic future looks neat and even ineluctable.

"They have the power of ideas... The fascinating thing about this government is they're utterly convinced they're doing something unique," said a European academic who has studied Sudan all his life.

"You get the idea they've got the perfect blueprint. All they need is perfect people to carry it out," he added.

But step outside Mr. Tourabi's office and the imperfect reality of Sudan hits you in the face.

Around every city in the Arab north, displaced southerners, black Africans who share neither

Mr. Tourabi's Islamic faith nor his Arab culture, cluster in squalid ghettos. They learn simultaneously to speak Arabic and to hate the dominant race.

Move to the edges of Sudan, to the fields and the deserts, the mountains and the swamps, and the blueprint seems to spell enforced conformity in the name of progress.

Even among the Arabs of the north, senior civil servants cover before military officers 20 years their junior. Wispy-barded revolutionaries stalk government offices, gaining instant deference in the uniform of the People's Defence Forces, the ideologically correct militia.

Mr. Tourabi holds no public office but is widely thought to have masterminded the trend towards Islamic government in Sudan in the years since a military coup in 1989.

As an Islamic thinker he is scrupulously orthodox but he dwells little on religious concerns like God, truth, heaven or hell, explaining Islam instead in terms of political science.

In three hours of conversation, he did not mention the Prophet Muhammad but did say he respected the historic role of the Sudan's Communist Party.

The party, he said, had offered a programme to oppose colonial rule but, unlike his own movement, it was not based in tradition and so was doomed to fail.

"If you base your logic on religion, custom will find it hard

to oppose," Mr. Tourabi told Reuters. "When you want to mobilise people for public service and economic production you consider that as a religious vocation, just as modern capitalism started as a religious vocation."

As he sees it, Islamic rule will bring a benign autocracy, accountable through a series of consultative bodies, replacing military rule without the uncertainty of multi-party democracy.

Radical decentralisation would empower Sudan's peasants, nomads and farmers, 90 per cent of the 25 million people, a market economy would encourage them to produce more and mass education would wipe out illiteracy.

The country's six million black Africans, in conflict with Khartoum ever since independence, would be taught the language and culture of the Arab majority and offered economic and social development to end their backwardness.

Mr. Tourabi and his followers, a self-proclaimed elite, who have organised secretly since the 1940s, are not troubled by the use of force to achieve progress. "Did the West achieve democracy without violence?" Mr. Tourabi asked. "What about Cromwell (in England)? What about the 'French revolution'?"

The Islamists, with careful planning and rigorous self-discipline, have almost taken over government but the task of mobilising society has only just begun.

"I don't think we've given them enough credit for their organisational skills... Ever since they came to power people have been predicting their fall but this is just wishes," one European diplomat said.

Political analysts say that, instead of taking on all potential centres of opposition at once, they have set priorities, removing obstacles one by one.

Their first targets, the leadership of the army and of powerful political parties, have already been neutralised by forced retirements, executions and exile.

Hundreds of senior officers have been removed in just three years and even Sudanese critical of the government concede that the parties are fractured and weak.

Next come the regional elites, the tribes and traditional Muslim guilds like the Ansar and the Khatmia, whose influence will be stifled by a web of local and provincial councils.

Decentralisation and a shift towards agriculture will move the balance of power away from the cities, grinding the salaried middle classes down into poverty and impotence.

If the vision becomes a reality, an Islamic intelligentsia, rural in origin and educated under new mass literacy programmes, will become the new cadres of Sudan, dominating every field of life, including an economy dominated by the private sector.

Europe and U.S. lock horns, but is it a real crisis?

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuters

BRUSSELS — The United States and Europe are already fighting over trade and how to tackle the Yugoslav crisis in the early days of the Clinton administration, raising the spectre of a crisis in the Transatlantic partnership.

While some diplomats and analysts are convinced the problems are simply the teething troubles of a new U.S. administration trying to find its feet, others say these are the first signs of real trouble ahead.

"There are signposts here and we'll have to wait and see where the road leads. We could be in for big trouble," said one senior diplomat in Brussels.

The United States last week announced heavy import duties on steel from countries around the world, including seven from the European Community (EC), and then fired a second salvo at the EC Monday by threatening a ban on state purchases.

The 12-nation community, still struggling to sort out the terms of

a world trade deal with Washington, labelled the latest move "unilateral bullying". The United States had complained repeatedly about what it says is European protectionism.

But the threat of a Transatlantic trade war — as the industrialised world struggles to find a way out of recession — is not the only issue souring U.S.-European relations.

Washington has serious differences with its allies over how best to deal with the war in former Yugoslavia.

The 12-nation European Community has backed a peace plan to end the conflict in Bosnia, drawn up by international mediators Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance. Washington says the plan is flawed and has been pushing for tougher action against Serbia.

Lord Owen attempted to win backing for the plan Monday from U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher but failed.

"Everyone has doubts about the peace plan, including the Europeans, but they take the view that it is the only game in town," said another diplomat. "They argue that it should be

backed unless the Americans have a better idea."

The United States has also irritated its European allies by talking freely about tougher action while refusing to contribute troops to the U.N. forces already in Bosnia, many of them European, who could become targets if military measures come.

"It is all very well for the Americans to criticise from the sidelines," Lord Owen said Monday. "Why don't they come in? It would give the peace settlement a bigger chance."

The various trade rows, however, are potentially a much greater problem.

"The Clinton administration wants to send a message to the American public and to the Europeans that it takes the issue of jobs and helping the U.S. economy very, very seriously," said one European diplomat.

"But I don't think, if the Europeans get the point, that there will be a serious crisis. Clinton's most important political point is for domestic consumption, since he was elected to get the U.S. economy moving again," he said. "The problem, diplomats say, is

that if a trade war really breaks out, there could be consequences in fields such as defence and security."

During the cold war, the United States and European NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation), allies kept trade separate from those issues, united in their need to defend the West from what they perceived as the overwhelming Soviet-led threat.

Now that the threat has gone, there is no longer any reason to do so.

Washington has already told NATO it is slashing its contribution to common funding for the alliance and Mr. Clinton is widely expected to cut the number of U.S. troops in Europe further than the Bush administration had planned, perhaps to just 75,000.

"A trade war would undoubtedly affect our defence relationship with the United States and that would call into question the ultimate security guarantees for western Europe," said a NATO diplomat.

"The Americans and the Europeans still need each other. A divorce is the last thing we need."

LETTERS

Selective justice

To the Editor:

At a time when the world is witnessing the unforeseen consequences of the end of the cold war, it seems logical that the "responsible" sector of the international community should be striving to achieve some form of international stability. The Balkans, the Middle East and Africa are all regions where the Western powers have recently decided to get involved, but one question which inevitably arises is: How sincerely are the Western powers committed to the achievement of international stability?

The role of the United Nations, and especially the Security Council, has been supposedly enlarged since the beginning of the Gulf crisis in 1990. This is illustrated by the growing number of Security Council resolutions which the West, and the United States, are seeking to enforce. What is disturbing however is the age-old concept of double standard which in recent times has unwisely manifested itself in the behaviour of the British and American administrations. This clearly illustrates itself in the events of the last few days.

On Sunday, Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz effectively offered the release of Mark Rida and Paul Wainwright, imprisoned in Iraq for allegedly attempting to illegally enter Iraqi territory. His price for this offer was the unfreezing of Iraqi assets in the U.K. in order that Iraq may use this money to buy food and medicine for its malnourished and poverty-stricken population. Memories of the last hostage crisis came flooding back when the British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, declared that Britain did not do deals and that Mr. Rida and Mr. Wainwright had been illegally imprisoned and should be freed immediately. Moreover, no Iraqi assets would be unfrozen until Iraq complies fully with United Nations Security Council resolutions.

The following day Prime Minister Rabin of Israel declared that 100 of the 400 Palestinian deportees could return to Israel, and that the exile period for the remaining 300 could be halved to one year. It seems likely that this "compromise" on the part of Israel will be acceptable to the Americans and, one hastens to add, the British. Israel will have succeeded in its efforts to prevent the imposition of sanctions against it, and any opposition to the terms of compromise by the Palestinians will inevitably appear extreme and unreasonable. Needless to say, the Palestinians can also expect criticism for their refusal to accept Israel's half-way measures and a return to a fresh round of peace talks.

All this is clear while, in fact, Israel is not fully complying with Resolution 799 which calls for the "immediate" return of all the "deportees" to their homeland. There is no dispute in the West that the deportations are illegal under international law, and yet one does not see anything in the behaviour of Britain or the United States to suggest that they are as concerned with the enforcement of international law in this case, as they are in the case of Iraq.

In no legal system in the world, is justice enforced selectively. It seems that international justice is, however, and it would be fraudulent of the British government and the United States administration to pretend otherwise.

Abdullah Samir Matarawi,
London.

A prayer for justice

To the Editor:

We are writing to express our deep regret, sorrow and shame at the Anglo-American bombing of Iraq.

This is an irrational assault on a suffering nation, and the hypocrisy of our double standards is manifest to all. Many of us are aware how the economic sanctions are afflicting the people in Iraq and we acknowledge that our own failure to achieve our independence leaves us accomplices in these crimes.

We look forward, however, to the future when we believe that justice will be done for all, Iraqi, Palestinian or Bosnian, and we pray that this day comes soon.

Alan Clayton,
Janet Cameron,
Scots for Peace and Freedom,
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Scotland.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Hatmal's paintings — symphony dedicated to nature

By Ica Wabbah
Jordan Times Staff
Reporter

AMMAN — The secluded, thick-walled, white rooms of the Balka Art Gallery provide an ideal haven for the

weary town denizens seeking escape from the hustle and bustle of crowds and businesses. But on a wet winter day of a morose February, Alfred Hatmal's paintings have the power to transpose you into a world

of torrid sun and sensations. The Syrian artist's canvases, for the first time in Jordan, are sure to stir dazzling feelings in the viewer, with the bold knife strokes of thick oil hinting at silhouettes, landscapes or

still life. An explosion of colour will attack the senses. Orange-red fire and shades of yellow meet and fuse passionately to create vales, hills or craggy mountains always animated by the human presence.

Fulgurant impressions pass in front of the eyes trying to stop them and make out the female figures, symbols, like the sensible ochre of the soil, of fertility and union.

ART REVIEW

Groups of peasants give life to most of the paintings: Reaping crops, stashing haystacks, walking in a procession (are they going about their daily chores in the fields or are they part of an exodus, like so many others in the life of Arabs, one wonders).

Trees in flower and fenced fields make the almost abstract paintings strike a familiar chord, bringing nature to human proportion and perspective.

Whites, sandy browns, yellows and olive greens intimate nature, a nature at peace, in complete harmony



Oil on canvas. One of Alfred Hatmal's works on display at the Balka Art Gallery in Fuhais

with man. Here and there, a slash of light green, and blue or purplish mauve gives a more aggressive touch to the overflowing palette of life's colours.

The paintings are a symphony dedicated to happiness, to nature, to the woman. They touch more

than one sense and leave you wanting to enter in communion with nature and the reality of the artist.

The exhibition is inaugurated today by Senator Layla Sharaf in Fuhais and will run through Feb. 20. The gallery is open daily, between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Artist dies

The artist died of cancer in Damascus Monday at the age of 59. The deceased was preparing to travel to Jordan for the inauguration of his exhibition. Sources at the gallery told the Jordan Times that the exhibition will be held as programmed.

Mr. Hatmal was born in 1934 in Barr Elias, Lebanon. At first, he studied art on his own. Later he was trained by veteran Arab artists like Adham Ismail and Nathem Al Ja'fari. He also studied fine arts at Syrian schools of arts and colleges.



Alfred Hatmal

The late Mr. Hatmal organised his first personal exhibition in 1950 at the National Gallery in Damascus. Afterwards, he had more

than 20 exhibitions in Syrian cities, Rome, and Paris. His work was displayed in group exhibitions in India, the former Soviet Union, Italy, France, Egypt and Lebanon.

He received Al Wahda (Unity) Award of the Syrian and Egyptian artists in 1958.

The deceased, whose works are now displayed in galleries in Damascus, Aleppo and other Syrian cities and world arts institutions, was a founding member of the Syrian Fine Arts Society and the Arab Union of Plastic Artists.

Vanished Arabian city is still a mystery

By Diana Abdallah
Reuters

RAS AL-KHAIMAH, United Arab Emirates — For centuries Julfar, a major trade port, dominated the history of the Gulf.

Then it vanished into the sands. Teams of archaeologists from Britain, France, Germany and Japan have failed to find the lost Arabian city despite years of intensive excavations.

"It's still a mystery," said Derek Kennet, one of the 15-member British team.

Julfar is mentioned as early as 696 AD as a major commercial port on the Arabian peninsula and as a shortcut into Oman avoiding the sometimes stormy narrows of the Strait of Hormuz.

The four teams of archaeologists have been excavating since 1989 on the

coast of Ras Al Khaimah in the United Arab Emirates in an unprecedented international effort to find the city.

At first they thought it was located a little north of Ras Al Khaimah under a long, low mound running along the sea shore.

"Now we think old Julfar was probably somewhere else," Mr. Kennet said.

The French team found a fort on the site and the British excavated five mosques built on top of each other.

But none of the remains, including a city wall excavated by the Germans and houses uncovered by the Japanese, show any traces of the ancient town.

The earliest finds on the site, in a coastal area backed by rugged brown mountains, date from the 1300s, a far cry from the city's historical roots

at least six centuries before. Surveys last year found evidence that it might have been located instead on the nearby island of Hulayla.

"I am 90 per cent certain old Julfar was on Hulayla. What we have here is from the 14th century when they moved the city down the coast," said Geoffrey King, head of the British team and a lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

But he said there were no plans yet to excavate Hulayla.

Colleague Kirsty Norman said the five-year project was vital to uncovering the history of the Emirates.

"What we did will provide the core of knowledge on the Islamic period here... Our work was pioneering and the first in the Islamic field

here," she added. "The mosque is one of the main solid structures and the only such sequence of mosques from the 14th century to the 19th excavated in the Arabian peninsula."

The ground around the site is covered with hundreds of small pieces of broken pottery, porcelain and glass. Some is local and much of it Persian, Indian and Chinese, mostly imported between the 14th and 19th centuries.

The British have found 340 coins which they believe date back to medieval times.

They say it is the largest collection of Islamic coinage found on one site in the Emirates.

The project, jointly funded by the Ras Al Khaimah government and several local and foreign organisations, is nearing its end.

The British team has finished its excavation but will be back to study the unearthed material. The French have one more season while the rest have completed their work.

The four teams never excavated at the same time. Beatrice De Cardi, known as the doyenne of archaeology in the Gulf where she has worked since 1968, helped start the project but said there were financial problems.

"I tried to raise funds in England but I drew a blank because of the recession and the general lack of interest now in Arabian archaeology," said the 78-year-old, who is always seen at the site with an immaculate hairstyle and make-up.

Members of the British team say there is more to be

found in the Emirates.

"Many people believe that this is a backwater but it is a misconception that there was just a bunch of bedouin tribes doing nothing... There are signs of international trade links," said Mr. Kennet.

"If you go to any wadi (dry stream bed) you could expect to find sites going back to the second and third millennium BC," Ms. Norman said.

Mr. King and a British team will be back in March next year for the biggest British archaeological undertaking in the Emirates.

He said they would survey and excavate sites on more than 100 small islands off the coast of Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE, as well as part of the coastline.

"Nobody has done any comprehensive work there. It is an absolute blank," he said.

Rough justice

Making Women Talk: The Interrogation Of Palestinian women detainees by The Israeli General Security Services

By Teresa Thornhill
Lawyers for Palestinian Human Rights, London 1992, £5.99

One of the more insidious aspects of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip is the apparently scrupulous legality with which it is conducted. To outside eyes the system appears rooted in a mass of bureaucratic checks and balances, thus making the risk of injustice very small.

In actuality, of course, there are a good many murky areas in Israel's system of justice. It is one such area — the treatment of Palestinian women detainees — that Teresa Thornhill has chosen to focus on. She reveals with precision and clarity some of the depths to which the Israeli General Security Services (Shin Bet) are prepared to sink in order to secure a conviction.

The Israelis seem determined to ensure that their version of reality prevails, which prompts them to go to extraordinary lengths to suppress any manifestation of Palestinian nationalism. One of the tactics they use is the criminalisation of Palestinian political activity. Suspected activists are charged with endangering the security of the state of Israel. This has two consequences: it places large numbers of politicised Palestinians in prison while, at the same time, inspiring fear in the population as a whole.

For women the repercussions of interrogation at the hands of the Shin Bet are liable to be considerably more damaging. In Palestinian society, with its entrenched notions of female honour, the possibility of someone's daughter, wife or sister being exposed to sexual harassment or even actual attack by the Israelis is appalling. Yet, since the Intifada began, attitudes towards the proper role of women have been slowly changing and Palestinians are now more likely to take pride in an imprisoned female family member.

The system devised by the Israelis to intimidate and punish Palestinians for alleged "security" offences is an elaborate one. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, justice is dispensed through a number of military courts. But it is justice of a rather dubious nature, illustrating, as Teresa

Book reviews

Thornhill points out, "the widely held view that the military justice system exists to serve a political function rather than one of genuine law enforcement".

Certainly for any Palestinian woman unlucky enough to be arrested for an offence, real or alleged, the consequences are very bleak indeed. Thornhill sets out to prove that the Shin Bet do not merely mistreat but actually torture detainees in order to wring confessions out of them. She further shows that the Israeli government, in violation of its international obligations, goes as far as to condone the use of torture, or "moderate physical pressure", as it is euphemistically described. She explains, using numerous examples, how many women confess to the crimes of which they are accused just to stop the torture, which includes sexual harassment and psychological torment as well as physical violence.

Thornhill, a barrister by profession, has collected the personal testimonies of a cross-section of women detainees. She has placed them within a larger framework which considers Israel's legal system, its obligations and responsibilities under international law and the ingenious, but ultimately shoddy, ways in which it has allowed itself to deviate from notions of fairness, honesty and accountability. In the process, she exposes an Israeli society so obsessed with its own national survival that it has sacrificed all concern for the human rights, or even the humanity, of others — Middle East International.

Maria Holt

Conceived In The 'imperial womb'

Original Sins: Reflections On The History Of Zionism And Israel

By Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi
Pluto Press, London 1992, £29.95/£9.95 (pb)

As political Zionism nears its centenary, Beit-Hallahmi offers an intriguing analysis of the movement. Two assumptions are found to have antedated Zionism's origins and two to have ushered its consequences.

Identifying anti-semitism as an "original sin", the author locates in this evil the genesis of political Zionism. Jewish emancipation in the 19th century was followed by assimila-

tion and the hope that secularism would lead to anti-semitism's demise. Instead, Europe's traditional ideological complex against Jews was reconstructed into scientific racism. Assuming both the continuance of anti-semitism and the failure of assimilation, early Zionists advocated a secular Jewish nationalism to found a Jewish state through mass emigration to Palestine.

Zionists also assumed that Palestinians, confronted with European settlers, were to be displaced and dispossessed easily. Their colonial-settler enterprise controlling the strategic Levant, the Zionists further assumed support from world powers.

Conceived to end Jewish suffering, Beit-Hallahmi argues Zionism cannot be construed a success. Zionists made false assumptions regarding the future of anti-semitism and assimilation: the majority of world Jewry, including Holocaust survivors, have not settled in Palestine; Zionists also erred concerning the facility with which the natives were to be divested of their land and national rights. If Zionism was to provide a refuge for Jewry, the ongoing war against the natives of West Asia grants anything but safety. Beit-Hallahmi wonders what has been the greater, more durable achievement for world Jewry in the last hundred years, the prosperous, assimilated, English speaking diaspora or the fragile security of Israel.

If Zionism has been unsuccessful managing the natives of West Asia or in convincing world Jewry to come to Palestine, it has succeeded in negotiating with great powers. Gestating in a "British imperial womb", Israel later received French support when that country was fighting indigenous nationalists in Algeria and Indo-China. Now, Israel has America's benefaction. Whereas the original logic and justification of Zionism has been undermined by late 20th century reality, the movement's consequence has been the creation of a colonial garrison state useful to Western imperial powers, dependant on foreign subsidies and exploiting the cheap labour and captive market of the natives.

The early Zionists and their critics knew the means to the end of a Jewish state in West Asia was consequential upon another "original sin" of settler-colonialism and the dispossession of a whole people. Although this second "original sin" was initiated generations ago, it persists and must be confronted by Israelis. Admitting his suggestion may be fantasy, Beit-Hallahmi believes the only solution to the two questions — providing true security for colonialism's children and ending native suffering — is for Israelis to admit the "sinful" nature of their state and, seeking "atonement", yield Palestinian national rights — Middle East International.

Ben Cohen

Diary

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE: It is unconfirmed, but overseas news has it that the United Nations is about ready to appoint former Syrian planning minister, Sabah Bagjaji, as head of its Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), which is temporarily based in Amman. After Jordanian Tayseer Abdul Jaber left that position at the end of January, the general analysis was that a non-Jordanian would have to be appointed to the vacant post if Jordan was to stand a better chance of hosting the ESCWA Headquarters permanently. If the appointment of Mr. Bagjaji is confirmed, Jordan's hand in the run-up to hosting the headquarters may be strengthened, especially since Lebanon, which had hosted ESCWA before the civil war, was lobbying hard to take the organisation back. Former prime minister and popular politician Salim Al Hoss was reportedly offered the executive secretary's job but rejected it and, for that matter, the candidacy any other Lebanese personality, in a bid to improve his country's chances of winning ESCWA back. The rule of thumb is that a country cannot have the top position of any U.N. organisation and its headquarters at the same time, and the proposal for a Syrian to head ESCWA will most probably be the key to solve the impasse about ESCWA's whereabouts.

THIS TIME CONFIRMED: While people of the United Nations would not confirm or divulge news about executive moves inside their organisation, the Americans are, for once, being forthcoming on their internal affairs. It is official: U.S. Ambassador Roger Harrison is leaving his job this summer and will not take another diplomatic post, since he is leaving the foreign service for an academic post in the U.S. Why Mr. Harrison is leaving the diplomatic service, having served as ambassador only once, is unclear. It may well be true that he has reached retirement age and what service he has done for his country's officialdom is enough for him. The more important question, for some people at least, is who will succeed him as U.S. envoy to Jordan. The most talked about name is that of Edward (Skip) Gnehm, who currently serves as ambassador to Kuwait. "Skip," as everybody in Jordan knows him from his days of service as deputy chief of mission here, is reported to be unsure whether he wants to stay in the region following his, well, "unpleasant" experience in Kuwait. He is known to like Jordan and its people very much, but it is also said that he might want to go back to the State Department, where senior officials would want him back. The departure of Ambassador Harrison, by the way, will be accompanied by quite a few other departures of embassy officials, leaving the mission with so many new faces to get used to. But such is the nature of the work of foreign diplomats: You know them, get used to them and they leave.

NEVER ENDING APPOINTMENTS: And while on the subject of appointments — executive, diplomatic and otherwise — Dr. Marwan Muasher, who heads the Jordan Information Bureau (JIB) in Washington and doubles as spokesman for the Jordanian delegation negotiating peace with Israel, will be staying in his post despite earlier rumours that he was ready to move back to Amman. At the end of a two-week trip to Jordan, in which he broached the subject for his return either to a government post or "preferably" to the private sector, it was decided that he should hang on to his job in Washington, at least until the end of this year. Faysal Tarawneh, who has just been appointed ambassador to the U.S., would need the help of an experienced hand in the American capital, and Dr. Muasher should assist him in that regard, the latter was told. Besides, he was asked to stay at JIB for other undisclosed reasons as well. For the record, Dr. Muasher was known to Jordan Times readers not long ago as the writer of a weekly column called "Talking Straight." This time, it seems, he was at the receiving end of what others might call "talking straight."

SUBJECT CLOSER TO HOME: Journalists of the government-owned Sawt Al Shaab newspaper recently decided to submit demands for improved working conditions and announced their willingness to go on strike if the demands were not met. The Shaab journalists so-called "uprising" did not come as a surprise, since it was just preceded by a similar move by their counterparts at Al Rai Arabic daily. News had reached Al Shaab that their colleagues at Al Rai had achieved for themselves big gains, both on the professional and material fronts, by threatening to strike against the management of their newspaper. Nevermind that Al Rai is a much bigger and richer daily than theirs. Al Shaab guys were intent on achieving victory over the financial directors of their daily, which had been a money-losing machine for years anyway. Well, they were "determined" to do that until they heard news right. The Al Rai Revolt had literally achieved nothing in terms of substantive gains for its employees, and Al Shaab's people would have to settle for whatever offer their management had to make. It was about small gains on both sides of University Road (which houses both papers), in fact, forcing attention to shift back to the bigger issue of the two dummies that the "press association" had claimed from the government at Sports City down the street. Finally, that association has the money and the land to build a new, sort of respectable "press club." But will the association move from its debilitated present location on Jabal Amman, and, if so, when? This is the real question. That is upper most on the minds of all Jordanian journalists now. Their past experience is that their league had never missed a chance to miss a chance in moving out of the slums onto higher grounds.

OUT IN THE DESERT: The Jordanian press was taken aback this week when Saudi government-guided newspapers let off a broadside against what they described as anti-Saudi attacks in Jordanian newspapers. Local journalists and editors said they could not recall any such recent criticism of Riyadh in the local papers that would warrant the vehement attack from the Saudi newspapers of Okaz and Al Jazira. As a matter of recent practice, Jordanian dailies have been refraining from criticising the Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia, and the latest Saudi salvo caught many editors by surprise. Several Jordanian journalists say the two or three articles which could bear some semblance to criticism of the Gulf states were reprinted from London-based papers — one of them reporting the Kuwaiti financial scandal and the other on a rift between the Saudi theocrats and the regime. Both stories originally appeared in English and were translated and run in local papers with proper attribution. The Jordan Times ran those English texts as they appeared in foreign publications. If that is what was seen as "venomous Jordanian media attacks against Saudi Arabia," then Jordanians would do well to look at just how Saudi papers begin to define journalism, and for that matter, criticism too.

Nermeen Murad

Versions, Releases and Co.

By Jean-Claude Elias

Without the programmes or software that give them life, Personal Computers (PCs) are dummy and useless machines made of plastic, metal, glass and silicon. Designing and programming a good piece of software to serve your own needs is neither an easy nor a quick job, unless you are a highly professional and experienced analyst and programmer. Fortunately, the industry offers a huge array of ready-made programmes covering subjects as diversified as engineering, word processing, calculations, communications, management, accounting, games, etc...

About 70 per cent of the above programmes, or packages as they are often called, are priced in the range \$100 to \$400. Fifteen per cent of them cost between \$400 and \$2,000 particularly those designed for engineering, while the last 15 per cent category is made of simple software called "utilities" and cost less than \$100. It is now common to find utility packages at \$30 or \$40. The point is that most of the ready-made software for PCs is not expensive at all, making its purchase much more tempting than the development of one's own programmes. Moreover, the quality of the ready-made software — usually the result of months, sometimes years, of work by a highly specialised and experienced team of experts — is superior to anything an amateur or even an isolated specialist could achieve on his own.

The first time a given package is finished and ready for sale, its designers give it a version or release number. There are several reasons for that. Software design and programming is such a complex task that it is virtually impossible to have really satisfactory results from the first version. It could contain, at best, minor weaknesses or omissions, and at worst, "bugs" — programming errors in computer jargon. Testing all this before releasing the package in the market would take too long for the developer who prefers to have the test actually done by the large number of users. Although it sounds unfair and unethical, this procedure works fine. The users are warned against possible errors and they are asked to feed back their opinion and remarks to the developer. The typical user is someone who is dying to try out the new programme whatever its flaws. He or she is also much flattered to contribute to the improvement of the package by giving his opinion and ideas.

Apart from weaknesses and errors, programmes can always be improved by receiving more functions and utilities, by becoming easier to use, faster, and more particularly, by being more adapted to newly released hardware. With the fast development of electronics, one can easily see how this process can go indefinitely. Software has to stand the test of time, acquire some maturity, before really being efficient and becoming famous. On average, it takes at least three or four versions before a certain package gains popularity, but the high demand on such products and the merciless competition between software

chip talk



houses often leads to early market release.

Although software designers rely on the users' feedback to polish and improve their work, they nevertheless carry testing before the preliminary launching of their products to ensure a minimum reliability. Those who don't follow this rule run the risk of being phased out of the market, for the users' verdict is ruthless. On the other hand, reputable designers give their clients an important warranty: After a package is sold, the buyer has the right, for a small fraction of the initial price and at any time, to an upgrade — the newer version — whether it is an improvement or a correction of the previous version. This gives the user the long term safety of always being updated, and the software developer the certainty that his customer will stick to his product and won't be purchasing a similar package from a competitor, for he would then have to re-invest again the full initial price.

Still, the "version" problem sometimes drives users crazy from the technical point of view at least. For instance, MS-DCS (Microsoft Disk Operating System) version 4.00 was supposed to be better than 3.30. Well it wasn't. Although it solved some of the difficulties of earlier releases, it introduced others. It was only with MS-DOS 5.00 that things really got better. Another kind of problem is that some versions are not worse or better than others but are meant to work with different hardware or to be compatible with different software environment like the Operating Systems or MS-Windows.

In the last few years, which saw an amazing number of new versions of the most popular packages like a dBase, Windows, DOS, Excel, Word, Lotus and Quattro to name only a few, I developed the habit of waiting for anything between six months and one year after the release of a new version of a given software, in order to upgrade from the older one I was using till then. This wait-time allows me to gather information from international PC magazines tests and users locally and worldwide, and check whether the said newer version has been well accepted and actually brings me something more and doesn't contain any bugs. In other words, I let the other users do the testing for me.

A dream come true

By E. Yaghi

Dana was born in America and until the age of 5, she attended a nursery school there. It was in her pre-school that adventure in the land of knowledge was first introduced to her through bright colourful toys and an attentive teacher. As most young children, she was inquisitive and quick to learn.

One parent-teacher day, Dana stood with her large brown eyes fixed on her instructor who said to the child's mother: "Your daughter is very intelligent. With proper care, she will become an eager and diligent student. I advise you to pay attention to her so that you can take advantage of her curious and keen mind!"

When she was 10 years old, Dana and her parents moved to Amman. She was placed in a private school because she could speak no Arabic. During her first days of school, she would run home in tears and complain: "Mommy, the other kids make fun of me because I can't speak Arabic and I don't have any friends. I'm lonely. I don't like my school and I want to go back to America!"

"There, there child," her mother would coax, "things will get better soon. You just have to keep trying. You'll see, you will have many friends in no time at all."

It wasn't long before the young girl learned Arabic and she did begin to have friends but she never forgot those first years in the United States where learning had been an exciting adventure.

Yet, as she grew older, somehow her thirst for knowledge was never satisfied. Much of her success in school depended on memorisation and not on understanding. It was very difficult for Dana to master this challenge for she had always depended upon her comprehension to guide her. By the time she reached Towjiji, she was quite frustrated and she still found her greatest problem to be in the gruelling task of learning by heart all her lessons. She confessed to her mother: "It's so hard for me, Mom. I'm still not used to memorising so much stuff. I guess this will always be my weakest point."

"Just do your best child. That's all I ask of you," her mother replied.

In spite of her defaults, Dana did quite well and was accepted into a university in Jordan. She majored in English literature and minored in education. But to her disappointment, she noticed that exams were still based

mainly on memorising the lectures that professors delivered as well as memorising the required material. She discovered too that students, like some primary and secondary schools were still intimidated by their instructors and dare not question their marks even if they failed. Dana had to depend on her intelligence to help her in her own battle against failure. Overcoming her many obstacles, she successfully completed her studies at the university. Now what was she to do with her degree?

"I'm going to start a new kind of kindergarten, like the one I used to go to," she announced to all those who inquired about her plans for the future. "I'm going to teach children how to think and if I'm lucky and my school goes well, I will expand it to include all elementary classes!"

Somewhat hesitantly, her father lent her some money to establish her own pre-school and kindergarten on the condition that once she became successful, she would repay him. In the beginning, her classes were small, but she had bright colourful toys, immense enthusiasms plus a whole lot of love to give to her protégés.

After a short time, her small school grew famous and she profited enough money to help fulfill her dreams. "Dad," she said one day, "instead of paying you back right now, how about enlarging my school to include the 6th grade?"

"Well," her father said, rubbing his chin in thought. "I'm not going to forget your debt. However, since you've done so well and have such vitality and enthusiasms. I say, go for it!"

And she did. She built on to her original tiny building and when her school was completed, she painted the classrooms every colour of the rainbow, put in blue slides and red swings and had a seesaw and a merry-go-round too. She had an abundant supply of unbreakable toys for the smaller children to play with and she recruited teachers who were dedicated to impart knowledge to their students as if it were their sacred duty. Children began to use their inquisitive minds and search for answers and ask questions in order to discover the secrets of the wonderful and surprising world that they were living in. Truth became a concept that they investigated for themselves and they learned to think.

Some day, Dana hopes to have an additional secondary school as well. With such spirit, will power and God's help, she's bound to succeed, for she knows that knowledge can be an exciting journey to the young if the guide is a good, competent and trusted one.

A call through the twilight zone

By Nizar S. Yaghi

The other day I sat down and began to drink my afternoon tea in the dusky cool under an old oak tree and several thoughts came to my mind concerning the condition of human affairs. As I was thinking, certain subjects circled in the corridors of my mind and I began to ask myself such questions as: Is there justice in this world? Is this universe as God wanted it to be? Why don't love and peace prevail? In order to obtain a non-biased answer to these questions, I decided to ask a non-partisan who doesn't yet belong to any country or particular side.

So, I picked up the receiver of the telephone and asked the operator to connect me with a bizarre number. In an astonished voice she protested, "But sir, there is no such number as you request and I'm afraid that it is impossible to connect you with your desired party!"

"Operator, will you please just do as you are told," I insisted. "I will take care of the rest."

Hence, the operator obediently carried out my strange request and presently a squeaky voice answered, "Can I help you sir?"

Even though I had insisted that the operator connect me with my desired party, I must confess that I was amazed to hear the tiny voice at the other end of the line, for the person I had begun to converse with was still not born. However, I controlled my emotions and replied, "Oh, yes please, I want to consult you about some matters of immense concern."

"Well go ahead, for I've got nothing to think of or worry about," the fetal voice said. "I am in my own world here. I fear nothing, food comes to me through a magic tube. I am warm and placid with peace, there is no killing here, no lying and no injustice so you may say whatever you wish."

"Thank you for your hospitality and your congeniality."

your eminence to be. I envy your beautiful life, but what about my life? Why is it full of the killing of innocent people? Why do the strong overcome the weak? Why isn't there justice here and why aren't people lovable and merciful to each other?" I asked.

"You are right in this respect," the small voice said with a bubbly sound. "I have the power to see into the future until the minute of my birth, and then I shall swim in the River of Forgetfulness and afterwards know nothing, not even who I am or where I came from until I learn the speech of humans. Otherwise, if I was born knowing the things I know now, my new born baby's hair would turn white in seconds. I understand that Iraqi people are being killed as though their blood was cheap. Muslims in Bosnia are being tortured without anybody caring. Libya has been under economic sanctions for months and Palestinians are being killed every day. Yes, I know of these events but in my opinion all of these tragedies are due to one reason and that is because people don't obey the rules of God and instead follow their own rules which they think are better and more amenable to human life. But they are wrong, for didn't they hear God's words? 'We sent down in the Koran that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe. To the unjust it causes nothing but loss after loss.' I do hope that things will be different and there will be a change for the better in this world."

After my conversation with my unique acquaintance, I reflected on his words of wisdom and concluded that this embryo might have the correct answer to many of the problems of the human race. Perhaps my faith in my fellow human beings is shaken, but it is stronger than ever in the God that created me. As things are now, the world isn't a place that will offer the unborn much hope, comfort or peace.

The writer is a grade 12 student at Al-Hussein College High School.

'Drop your trousers here for best results'

By Paul Ames
The Associated Press

It's enough to make a grammarian groan. The European Community (EC) — no stranger to tortured language itself — has collected some of the worst abuses of the queen's English from around the world.

Take the Paris hotel that told guests: "Please leave your values at the desk."

Or the Bangkok dry cleaner's boast: "Drop your trousers here for best results."

And what did an Austrian ski resort mean when it urged guests "not to preambulate the corridors in the hours of repose in the boots of ascension?"

Most of the dozens of such doozies in EC's collection were compiled by its travelling translators beginning in July, when they were asked to look out for examples of odd English. Others were taken from published collections.

Under the title "Mind Your language," the fractured phrases are displayed on boards in the lobbies of

the EC's Centre Borschette office complex.

The hotels and other businesses aren't named and weren't informed that their notices would be used.

The EC's compilation of linguistic lusus shows English is spoken widely but not always well.

An Acapulco hotel, for instance, reassures guests about the drinking water: "The manager has personally passed all the water tested here."

A Tokyo hotel advised guests it "is forbidden to steal hotel towels please." But politely added, "If you are not a person to do such thing please not to read notice."

Another Tokyo hotel, seemingly more relaxed about morals, said, "You are

invited to take advantage of the chambermaid."

But a sign at a German campsite warned:

"It is strictly forbidden on our camp site that people of different sex, for instance men and women, live together in one tent, unless they are married with each other for that purpose."

A Zurich hotel with similar worries offered this solution:

"Because of the improper type of furniture in the bedroom, it is suggested that the lobby be used for this purpose."

A temple in Bangkok warned visiting tourists: "It is forbidden to enter a woman, even a foreigner, if dressed as a man."

A notice in a Norwegian

cocktail lounge stated, "Ladies are requested not to have children in the bar."

A Rome doctor specialised in "women and other diseases," and a Swedish furrier offered coats "made for ladies from their own skin."

A Prague tourist agency urged tourists: "Take one of our horse-driven city tours. We guarantee no miscarriages."

In Tokyo, a car rental agency offered these instructions to clients:

"When passenger of foot heave into sight, tootle the horn. Trumpet him melodiously at first but if he still obstacles your passage then tootle him with vigor."

A tailor on the Greek island of Rhodes couldn't guarantee good, finished summer suits ordered by tourists. Why? "Because is big rush we will execute customers in strict rotation."

And if you thought flying was fun, go to the Copenhagen airport where an airline vowed to "take your bags and send them in all directions."

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

AMAZING FACTS

- The Turkish people are the biggest consumers of cereal products.
- In 1935, the Swastika became the national flag of Germany.
- In 1874, Philadelphia became the first American city to have a zoo.
- Forty per cent of the human body is normally composed of muscles.
- The first seeing-eye dog was presented to a blind person on April 25, 1938.
- The longest moustache on record measures seventy-six inches.
- Approximately 75 per cent of all ulcer patients are men.
- The League of Nations was established June 28, 1919, and dissolved in April of 1946.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

Something to drink

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| — Do you have.....? | Indokum.....? |
| — Beer | Beersa |
| — Wine | Nibeed |
| — Soft drinks | Mashrobat khaffia |
| — Fruit juice | Aseer fawakeh |
| — Mineral water | Mayya ma'daniya |
| — We'd like some red/white wine. | Ayzeen nibeed |
| ahmar/abyad. | |
| — What's the best local wine? | Eh howa alsan nibeed mahalli? |
| — I want two bottles of cold beer. | Ayez laazteyn beersa sak'i. |
| — Strawberry juice | Aseer farawia. |
| — A glass of champagne | Kaas shampanya. |
| — Lemonade with little sugar | Lemouda bi-sukkar kalil. |
| — Orange juice without ice | Aseer burtukal bidoon talfi. |
| — A cup of coffee | Furjan kahwa. |
| — Coffee and milk | Kahwa bil-haleeb. |
| — Iced-coffee | Kahwa mutallija. |
| — Tea with mint | Shay bi-nana. |
| — Cocoa, cider, brandy. | Kakaw, aseer toffah, konyak. |

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Vocabulary

- (1) What is done with a BALALAIKA?
- (2) What period of time is a MILLENIUM?
- (3) With what sense is the word REDOLENT associated?
- (4) What is a PARAGON?
- (5) From what part of the world does the word KHAKI originate?
- (6) What is a SURROGATE?
- (7) LABIAL refers to what part of the body?
- (8) What is the precise meaning of the word HALLELUJAH?
- (9) What is a TRADE?
- (10) Diseases are often described as ENDEMIC; what does it mean?

JOKES

- Veteran: "Remember my telling you about that bullet

that went into my head in the last war?"

Wife: "Yes."

Veteran: "Well, I just got it out."

Wife: "What amazes me is that it was able to penetrate that skull at all."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

• A preacher's wife, a physician's wife, and a travelling salesman's wife were waiting for the fourth at a bridge one day when one of them brought up the subject of forgetfulness.

"I think my husband is the most forgetful man alive," declared the preacher's wife, "because he often forgets his notes and stumbles through his sermon in a deplorable manner."

"I think my husband is more forgetful than that," said the physician's wife. "He never seems to remember to take his medicine bag and has to come all the way home for something he needs."

"My husband," said the travelling salesman's wife, "came home the other day, tipped his hat politely to me and said, 'Haven't I seen you before!'"

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• Manager: "Why did you apply for the job of house detective? You have only one eye."

Applicant: "That's all I need to look through key-holes!"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

YOUR DREAMS INTERPRETED

COW: An omen of good luck and prosperity if the animal was content, gazing, chewing its cud, good looking, and/or being milked. However, if it was skinny, ugly, or attacked you, it represents threats to your most cherished plans, and the forecast of the outcome depends on the degree of the animal's disagreeable appearance and/or the outcome of the action. If you escaped, you will overcome all obstacles, but if you were trapped or injured, you must be prepared for a period of hard work without much joy.

DEER: If the deer was captive or in an unnatural surrounding, it signifies emotional upsets and/or disappointment in some trusted friend; however, in its natural habitat it augurs the cementing of a new and pleasant friendship. To kill a deer or see a dead one is a warning to look out for a backstabber masquerading as a friend.

LION: A lion featured in your dream is a symbol of social distinction and/or business leadership. If you heard the lion roar, you are likely to have to cope with jealousy from someone close to you. A friendly lion cub is a forecast of a new and valuable friendship.

PARROT: As you would expect, talking or noisy parrots in a dream forecast irresponsible gossip from which you will have to protect yourself; be energetic about it.

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PUZZLES

1. Which two letters make you sneeze?
2. What are the loneliest things in the world?
3. Here are the names of 10 countries and regions in anagram form. Can you unscramble them?

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. ERECT | 2. REIGN |
| 3. RUMBA | 4. ANALOG |
| 5. SPRUCY | 6. REGALIA |
| 7. URANISM | 8. TANGERINE |
| 9. ROMANIANS | |

لينا من الامارات

44-79 Rodulino

Christian Cabrol and the fight for life

By Patrick Olivier
PARIS — With his dazzling smile and youthful looks in spite of his forty-year-long career, Professor Christian Cabrol is the most famous French surgeon. As a pioneer in human and artificial heart

transplants, he gained the Pitié-Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris, where he works, a world reputation for heart surgery.

His book, *Parole De Médecin*, reveals the man that he is, the whys and

wherefores of his destiny, and his fight for life which takes him beyond the confines of his professional area and leads him to take up a sometimes anti-conformist position on all the touchy subjects concerning health.

If Christian Cabrol has become an ardent defender of life, it is not because, on his birth "he was so frail that people did not think he would live."

"I espoused this vocation of doctor as that of a soldier who would rather be killed on the spot than withdraw. I always fight to the end. For me, it is a sacred duty. One must not fail in one's task."

And, for forty years, he did not fail in his task. He is a glutton for work and is not tired by his job as he enjoys what he does. He is one of those lucky people who are "rested" by their work.

Moreover, he does not regret his complete involvement. "Work provides excellent distraction which has brought me great satisfaction and the joy of acquiring knowledge but, above all, of having become useful by accumulating competence in my area, that is to say in medicine."

After having Lillehei, the American surgeon who invented open-heart surgery, as his master, Professor Cabrol has himself become a master by being actively involved in

the fantastic progress made in heart surgery which, today, makes it possible to save 95 per cent of patients operated, compared with 5 per cent in the early days of heart surgery, and to successfully carry out most transplants.

Received opinions

Owing to Professor Cabrol's reputation, people are extremely attentive to his views on matters of health. His all-out fight for life leads him to take a stance in all areas of health and he is not afraid to go against received opinions.

For instance, the desperate fight to use all the sophisticated modern technical means and therapies available to prolong the life of patients artificially and almost indefinitely, is often called into question. True to himself and to his fight for life, Professor Cabrol, asserts that, on the contrary "Patients always have a little glimmer of life deep in their eyes which one cannot resolve to put out. It is so much easier to stop everything rather than to go on fighting at the cost of vigils and sleepless nights. One never gets used to people dying."

Professor Cabrol also stands first in line on the question of organ donations which are a condition of his being able to operate trans-

plants, his special area. He regrets that these donations are becoming more scarce (50 per cent of refusals compared with 20 per cent before), but, as chairman of France-Transplant, the organisation in charge of collecting organs, he is keen to make sure that donations continue to be free and is vehemently against any attempts, veiled or otherwise, to "commercialise the human body".

Christian Cabrol's stances are not limited to these subjects, however sensitive they may be, but extend to the problems of the structure of health in France.

First of all, on the matter of research, Prof. Cabrol attacks the fortresses that prestigious organisations have become in the area of research, such as the French National Scientific Research Centre (CNRS) and the National Institute for Health and Medical Research (INSERM). He denounces the "comfortable position of being civil servants of certain professional researchers" and, especially, the fact that all funding is mobilised in favour of these "closed" organisations alone, which limits innovations.

Last but not least, Christian Cabrol attacks the sacred cow of the social security system, to which the French are so attached. He can clearly see the dangers and the

necessary choices that they imply in order to preserve the future and the quality of medical treatment and thus the patients.

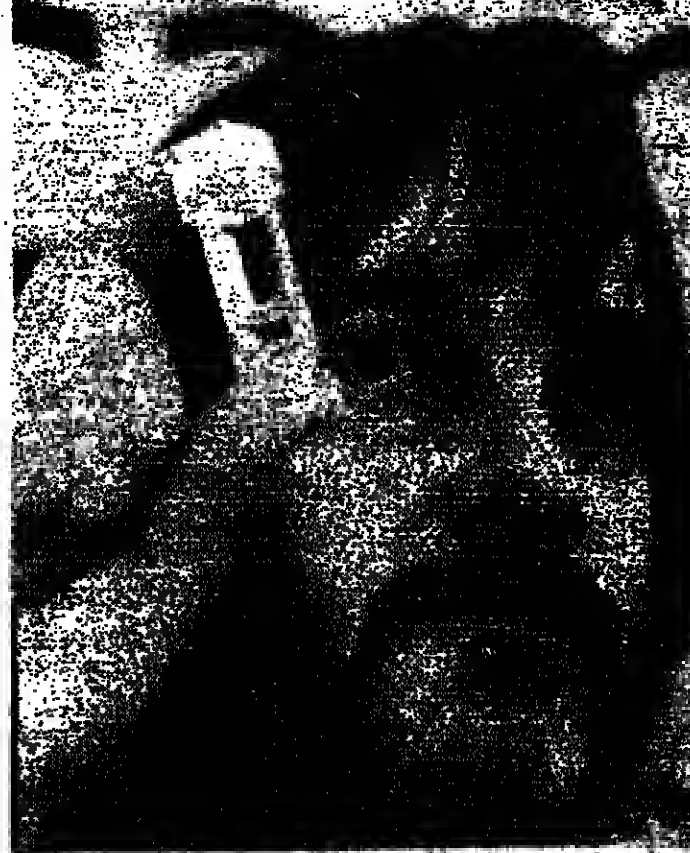
"It is true that the technical means available for medical treatment today have allowed for considerable progress about which everybody is delighted", he remarks. "But these breakthroughs have only been made possible thanks to sophisticated equipment which has enormously increased costs."

"My strongest wish is that greater thought be given to the problem of the economics of health. Medical treatments will not be credible if they do not prove that they can be rigorously managed financially". This rigour consists, first of all, in "making people responsible" so as to avoid "medical overconsumption".

Faced with the huge growth in medical treatments resulting from these increased means, there is only one solution: "One must have the courage to present the nation with a revision of the system of reimbursement in such a way that the beneficiaries of health care be more involved." This revolutionary proposal is typical of Prof. Cabrol's fighting spirit. His proposal seems, moreover, to have been heard as a revision of the French health system has just been undertaken — L'Actualité En France.



Professor Christian Cabrol performs a kidney transplant operation



Dr. John Arrand, who heads the cancer vaccine programme at the British Cancer Research Campaign (CRC)'s Paterson Institute in Manchester holds a vial of a vaccine designed to stop infection with the Epstein Barr Virus (EBV), which is known to cause several types of cancer (AFP photo)

Trials announced for vaccine against cancer-linked virus

LONDON (R) — British scientists have said the first clinical trials of a vaccine against a common virus linked to several types of cancer would begin within a year.

But Britain's Cancer Research Campaign (CRC), a national charity which funded the work, cautioned that it would be more than a decade before the vaccine, developed specifically to protect against Epstein Barr Virus (EBV), would be widely available.

EBV, a common Herpes virus that causes glandular fever, is carried by more than 90 per cent of the world's population and is linked with a number of different cancers worldwide, including Hodgkin's disease, a cancer of the lymph nodes.

In Africa, EBV is associated with another cancer of the lymphatic system called Burkitt's lymphoma. In China, the virus is thought to be responsible for causing cancer of the nasal cavity, which leads to more than 50,000 deaths a year.

Project leader Dr. John Arrand, of the Paterson Institute in the northern city of Manchester, one of three re-

search institutes involved in developing the vaccine, said: "If the patient trials repeat the success of the laboratory work, we expect this vaccine has the potential to protect millions of people throughout the world from often fatal EBV-related cancers."

Professor Gordon McVie, director of the CRC's Scientific Department, said clinical trials involving up to 100 Britons would begin at the end of this year or early in 1994. Prior to that, there would be a toxicity study involving 20 volunteers. Prof. McVie said initial results should be known within seven years but the vaccine, the result of more than 25 years of research, would not be widely available for several more years: CRC provided some £5 million (\$7.7 million) in funding.

Although viruses are thought to be involved in a fifth of all cancers, so far only four such viruses have been positively identified. As well as EBV these are human papilloma, which is linked to cervical cancer, Hepatitis B, which is associated with liver cancer and HTLV linked with some acute leukaemias.

Study: Lesbianism tends to run in families

By Brenda C. Coleman
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Lesbians and bisexual women are up to five times more likely than heterosexual women to have lesbian or bisexual sisters, indicating that female homosexuality runs in families, a new study found.

The report's author, J. Michael Bailey, led an earlier study published in December

1991 that found genes influence male homosexuality. His research for that study was based on male twins.

"Male homosexuality has been studied far more than female homosexuality, so we're a little further along in male research than in female research," said Dr. Bailey, an associate professor of psychology at Northwestern University.

His new study found that

lesbians and bisexual women were 2½ to five times more likely than heterosexual women to have lesbian or bisexual sisters. The variation depended on the strictness of defining sexual categories.

Subjects were 84 lesbian or bisexual women and 79 heterosexual women between ages 25 and 40 who were recruited through newspaper advertisements.

The lesbians and bisexuals

had a total of 99 sisters, of whom 12 were lesbians or bisexuals, for a rate of 12.1 per cent, Dr. Bailey said.

The heterosexual women had a total of 83 sisters, of whom two were lesbian or bisexual, for a rate of 2.4 per cent, Dr. Bailey said.

"The rates of the (homosexual) sisters in homosexual and heterosexual women were different enough that it's quite unlikely

they differed by chance," he said.

No good studies exist on the prevalence of homosexuality in U.S. society, but recent European studies suggest prevalences of 3 per cent for males and less than 1 per cent for females, Dr. Bailey said.

Sheri Berenbaum, a developmental psychologist at Chicago Medical School, said Dr. Bailey's study is the largest and best in a field sparse with data.

The new study may contain some bias because subjects were recruited through ads instead of randomly chosen, but "I would be pretty sure it doesn't account for the results," she said.

The findings by Dr. Bailey and co-investigator Deana S. Benishay are to be published in the February issue of the

American Journal of Psychiatry.

The report doesn't sort out whether genetic factors or social influences are at work, Dr. Bailey said. But he's researching the role of genes in lesbianism and plans to report on it in April.

One biological theory about homosexuality is that each man and woman has an area in the brain governing sexual orientation, Dr. Bailey said.

"If it gets masculinised, you're attracted to women. If it doesn't get masculinised, you're attracted to meo," he said.

In males, something blocking masculinisation would cause homosexuality; in females, something causing masculinisation would lead to lesbianism, he said.

Dementia afflicts 30% of 85-year-olds

BOSTON (R) — A study of 85-year-old men and women, designed to determine how many elderly people are affected by senility, has found that nearly 30 per cent have some form of memory disorder.

But the study, conducted in Sweden by a team of medical researchers led by Dr. Ingmar Skoog of the Sahlgrenska Hospital in Gothenburg, found that nearly half of the affected subjects had treatable forms of dementia.

Less than half of those with a memory disorder had Alzheimer's disease, which is untreatable. Some previous studies have concluded that Alzheimer's accounts for as many as 70 per cent of such cases.

The test population was drawn at random from Gothenburg, Sweden. Using a census registry, the researchers invited all 85-year-olds on the list of take part in a health survey. In all, 143 men and 351 women responded.

Of these, 147, about 30 per cent, were found to have some form of dementia, or severe memory disorder.

Over sixty medical problems are known to produce the symptoms of dementia. Only 43.5 per cent had Alzheimer's while 46.9 per cent in the Skoog study were afflicted by problems concerning the flow of blood to the brain as a result of strokes, a condition known as

vascular dementia.

Some of those strokes may be treatable or preventable by changes in diet, getting the person to stop smoking, giving blood pressure medicine and using Aspirin to prevent the formation of clots.

There is no known cure and no treatment for Alzheimer's, but an improved diet has been shown to slow the disease.

The study appears in the latest issue of the New England Journal of Medicine. In an accompanying editorial, Dr. Eric Larson of the University of Washington in Seattle noted that only recently had medical and lay education begun to debunk the "myth" that dementia was a normal accompaniment of the ageing process.

Doctors, Dr. Larson said, need to look for patients who are becoming affected by dementia.

"The high frequency of this condition means that clinicians need to develop everyday practice habits to identify patients with cognitive impairment, a task easily accomplished by simple testing of mental status and queries of those close to the patient," he said.

"Dementia places a patient at risk for excess morbidity from potentially problems, such as falls and fractures, adverse drug reactions, delirium, and the consequences of the inability to perform effective self-care."

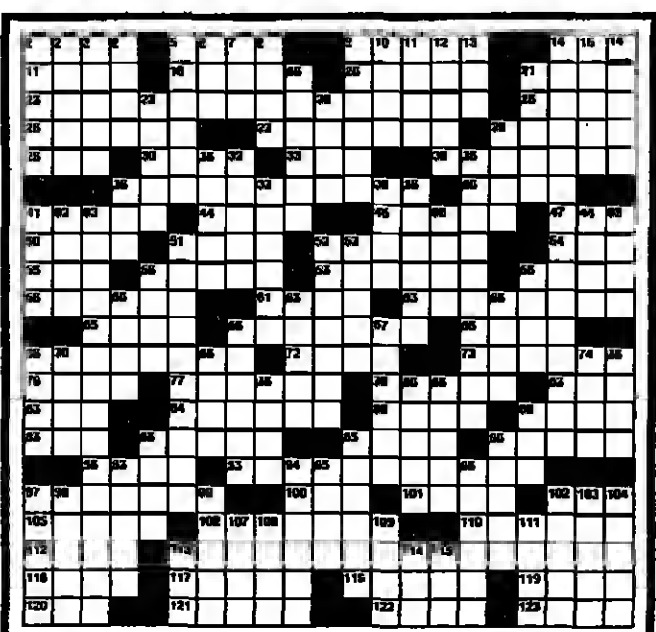
WEEKEND CROSSWORD

PRIVATE HOMES
By Arthur S. Verdesca

ACROSS
1. Handed wipers
3. Part of NFL logo
9. Kase's pal
14. Pradine
17. Address Loretta
18. Spoke
20. Electra, to
21. Tip
22. Vulture
23. One-time soccer
26. Ethical natural
27. New York Indians
28. Local sparrow
29. Sire in dress
30. Same
31. Sire in dress
32. Dancer

DOWN
1. Cerebral go
2. Tyric
3. Guide
4. Horace word
5. Wagoner
6. Hurdle
7. Indo — hair
8. Musical group
9. Circus by divine
10. Pater — Hays
11. Hymn of Troy
12. Tenny's pre
13. Feline profit
14. Human thing
15. Tenny's pre
16. Tenny's pre
17. Tenny's pre

40. Bookending
41. Western border
42. Sire in dress
44. Famous archer
45. Part of CAP
46. Pradine
47. Try new
48. Foretold
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Last Week's Cryptograms

1. We should be suspicious of one who peddles life insurance boasting, "Satisfaction guaranteed."
2. Happy taxpayer relaxed under apple tree after getting back big refund check.
3. Grandson of grandson catches fine Old-World sherris and orders California white wines instead.
4. Does being "retired" mean becoming tired a second time?

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. UG NWRL SOFFREFOX VEQKINE WON
KFOUPE, MTL RYRFX TWQX SOLVER KN
RF GORREOWEUP: QVFPXEL — By Barbara J. Baag

2. C E TFFH PCIR XCY AGFF ARLO EBL PGR
IFJCRTLJ LCWPIJ WPCY ABLO EBL
KRYJR. — By Gordon Miller

3. YO HITWIEZZ ZYOWACT JIMW XUV
ZWIGDKK HIXXQWT IQW FIZZQW XIRZW
TWXWQT HXFIATW XUWM JIM TWX AC
KWITXT DK QAO. — By Eugene T. Malaska

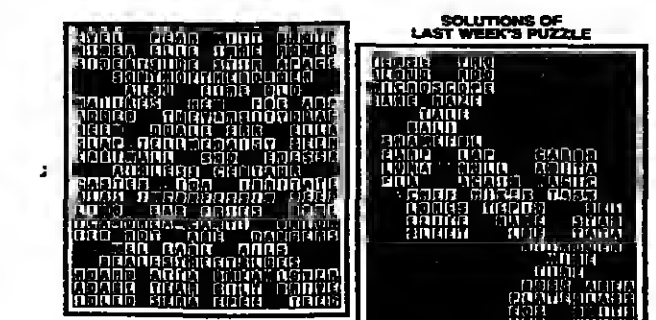
4. ROCEET HUWEPCHOW BLYTHOXU "POW WP
YEOCZ" LYHZEKX ROCK HWPL KHCWT. — By Armitage Shanks

Diagramless 19 x 19, By Frances Harton

ACROSS
1. In addition
5. Fore and —
8. Move rapidly
9. Succinct
12. Fragrance
13. Pick up the tab
14. Honor formally
15. Goddess of
16. Japanese leader
18. Kuma
19. Bend
22. Quaint

DOWN
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SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

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Congressman sees breakthrough in 'Ivan the terrible' case

WASHINGTON (R) — A U.S. congressman, who believes the wrong man was sentenced to death in Israel as the infamous Treblinka camp guard "Ivan the terrible," said Tuesday the real "Ivan" was living in Eastern Europe and may soon be arrested.

"The man responsible for the extermination of almost one million Jews at Treblinka is still alive and should be brought to justice," Ohio Democrat James Traficant told reporters, adding that it should take 60 to 90 days to capture him.

"He resides in eastern Europe. And our investigation will not only find him but will, hopefully, bring him to justice," said Mr. Traficant, who represents the Cleveland district where retired carworker John Demjanjuk, convicted in an Israeli court of committing the camp murders, lived.

Mr. Traficant, who has investigated the case since 1989, said the real culprit was Ukrainian-born Ivan Marchenko. "I'm very confident we're going to get this man," he said.

Demjanjuk is appealing against his death sentence to Israel, arguing that he was never a guard

at Treblinka and citing post-war testimony from now deceased guards at the Nazi camp in Poland that the real "Ivan the terrible" was Marchenko.

Demjanjuk's family say U.S. Justice Department officials ignored evidence that would have cleared him when they were considering deporting him to stand trial in Israel.

"Demjanjuk is not Ivan," Mr. Traficant said. "There is enough information to show that Marchenko is Ivan."

Israeli prosecutors have argued that Demjanjuk was identified by several survivors of the infamous camp and that documents prove he served as a guard at other camps. All records at Treblinka were destroyed in the war.

Mr. Traficant said the new evidence about Marchenko, including a high-quality photo, which he called crucial, will be sent to Demjanjuk's lawyers in Israel.

Marchenko, who would now be in his 80s, vanished after World War II, leaving his family in Ukraine.

Mr. Traficant would not say to which East European country Marchenko had been sighted.

Saddam advises Arafat to pursue talks

(Continued from page 1)

evictees under a U.S.-backed plan to prevent U.N. sanctions in Israel.

The offer was rejected by Arab states and the Palestinians.

Mr. Arafat would not specify the alternative offers which he said had been made through intermediaries.

"I am astonished as to how the big powers have achieved less than the others," he added. Mr. Arafat earlier told reporters there was no way he could accept the Israeli offer.

President Saddam awarded the Palestinian leader the "Order of the Mother of All Battles," Baghdad's name for the Gulf war.

The Iraqi news agency (INA) said President Saddam awarded the medal as a "tribute to the Palestinian people's stand along-

side the Iraqi people and armed forces" in the Gulf war.

In an interview with Reuters later, Mr. Arafat declined to say whether the PLO had apologized to Saudi Arabia for its stand in the Gulf war.

PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas was quoted as telling Riyadh that the organization had been wrong to support Iraq against the U.S.-led Saudi alliance. The PLO later said Mr. Abbas was expressing a personal view.

"The most important matter for us is how to strengthen Arab unity and we will continue in our target," Mr. Arafat said.

Mr. Arafat last visited Iraq in January, 1992.

He arrived from Jordan on Monday and was expected to leave later Wednesday or early Thursday.

U.N. condemns Sudan rebels

(Continued from page 1)

Macfar, chief of the Nasir faction, did not know about Mr. Magaw's raid until U.N. workers told him.

An attempt by SPLA factions to hold reconciliation talks in the Kenyan capital Nairobi this week looks set to fail because John Garang, rebel chief for 10 years, has spurned the offer to negotiate with the officers who have turned against him.

Fierce fighting between tribal forces of the SPLA and a dry season offensive by the Khartoum government expected to start within a few weeks will

make the job of relief agencies almost impossible, aid workers say.

The SPLA has fought what it sees as domination of the black, Christian south by the Arabized and Muslim north, but Colonel Garang's rival SPLA officers now seek secession for the south.

The government captured 14 towns in last year's offensive and the SPLA holds few towns.

Humanitarian relief has been consistently disrupted by both rebels and the government in a 10-year war that has killed 500,000 people and displaced 4.5 million southerners.

U.S. welcomes Iraqi change on zones

(Continued from page 1)

new administration's intentions, on the one hand, but on the other there is also something which makes us think they have chosen a new path. The situation is not clear.

On problems over U.N. inspectors seeking to verify Iraq's armaments programme, Mr. Ramadan said Baghdad was "frank and clear, but they want each day to create a problem and pretext to continue the (U.N.) embargo."

Asked if Iraq still claimed Kuwait as part of its territory, Mr. Ramadan said the frontiers defined by the United Nations were "just."

But he added: "Iraq has affirmed several times it has no bad intentions towards Kuwait or other objectives."

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, on a mission to reconcile Iraq with its Gulf war foes, said Wednesday that some Arab leaders were softening on Baghdad.

"From some of them I have got it," Mr. Arafat told Reuters when asked in Baghdad whether he had received signs from any Arab leaders that they were ready for better ties with Iraq.

Mr. Arafat, who said he had come to Iraq in a "small attempt" to help forge Arab unity, said it was too soon to reveal who those leaders were.

He said he carried no specific messages to or from President Saddam, whom he met during his visit.

"I would like this to be a big attempt but it is a small attempt," he said.

Mr. Arafat, who shuttles back and forth between Arab capitals, said he was also trying to mediate a territorial dispute between Egypt and Sudan.

Mr. Arafat's visit to Iraq is his first since January, 1992 and follows reports of a public apology by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to Saudi Arabia last month for backing Baghdad in the Gulf war.

The PLO later backed off from the statements, saying any apology made by Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas had been his own personal view.

Mr. Arafat would not say whether the PLO had apologized.

"Here we are (in Baghdad)," he told Reuters when pressed on whether an apology had been made. "The most important matter for us is how to strengthen Arab unity and we will continue with our mission."

Although Mr. Arafat made as many enemies in the Arab world as President Saddam, who said his invasion of Kuwait was a first step to liberate Palestine, the PLO leader still carries weight because of the Palestinian problem.

Iraq, under the grip of 2½-year-old U.N. trade sanctions which have blocked oil exports, last month said it wanted to open a new page in external relations.

Baghdad, which now says its designs on Kuwait are a "closed chapter," has also sent envoys to Arab capitals such as Algiers to seek support.

Kuwait said Wednesday rifts in Arab ranks caused by Iraq's 1990 invasion could be healed only when there was a change of government in Baghdad.

"We believe that mutual forgiveness is our best approach, but only when there is room for that and when the Iraqi regime changes," said Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Jabbar Al Sabah.

The official Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) said he made the remarks in the United Arab Emirates during a 13-nation tour aimed at rallying support for the emirate after a month of heightened tension with Iraq.

Sheikh Sabah reaffirmed that Kuwait was not calling for a lasting rift in Arab relations, but it had reproached some "fellow Arabs who saw Kuwait being invaded and its people's blood shed and acted as if nothing had happened," the agency said.

Algerian leaders under pressure

By John Baggaley
Reuters

ALGIERS — Algeria's army-backed leaders, apparently winning a war against Muslim fundamentalists, are under growing pressure to ease draconian security and set a timetable to renew an interrupted advance to democracy.

Opposition politicians are becoming increasingly restive after what many saw as the "damp squib" of a much-anticipated speech last month by Head of State Ali Kafi.

"The democratic camouflage and self-censorship are returning... even the 'thought police' are on the way back," said Hamdani, acting leader of the Socialist Forces Front (FFS), said in an interview published at the weekend.

Other groups, ranging from the formerly ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) to the moderate Islamic Al-Nadha party, say the offer in Kafi's speech of a referendum at some future date on unspecified constitutional changes was not the most important change needed.

"Algerians are fed up with words, with hearing what we're going to do. They want to hear what the authorities have done," said Mohammed, a middle-aged, self-employed resident of Algiers.

The calendar dictates the authorities must act soon.

On Feb. 9, a 12-month state of emergency expires. It was decreed after unrest erupted when the authorities cancelled an election the fundamentalists

were poised to win.

The decree stifled most political activity and is deeply unpopular with opposition groups, some of whom fear it will be extended.

A night curfew on most of Algeria's 26 million population faces strain when the Holy Month of Ramadan starts in about three weeks. Millions traditionally celebrate late into the night after fasting through the day.

The collective presidency, or High Council of State, said when it took over last January that its mandate would not go beyond December 1993.

Diplomats say there is little sign of preparation which must start soon for any election to replace the council and no guarantee this would solve anything.

"If they hold a referendum, there is no guarantee people will not abstain and cause political embarrassment," said one Western diplomat.

"And if they hold presidential elections they face the same problem. A carefully chosen candidate might be elected but if the people don't want him nothing will really change."

"It won't make the problems of long-term stability and sorting out the economy go away," FFS leader Hamdani and the FLN are pushing for the December deadline to be honoured.

"The FFS is not ready to give the High Council of State (presidency) and government, a political truce," said Mr. Hamdani.

The FFS came a poor second to the fundamentalists in the election, cancelled in January last year. The Islamic Salvation Front, which dominated the first round, was later outlawed.

The FLN, which ran Algeria for nearly 30 years of a one-party system but limped in third at the first round of the ill-fated election, welcomed Mr. Kafi's offer of renewed talks with political parties.

But last week it also reminded the leadership: "The transition period is that which was fixed for the (High Council of State) at its institution, which ends at the end of 1993."

When the presidency took over after President Chadli Benjedid quit, reaction from politicians at home and abroad ranged from outrage to concern.

Repeated pledges that none of the five men would retain power after December this year brought the leadership a form of recognition. But they also lit a political fuse to a deadline.

Apparent successes against fundamentalists has helped return the focus to politics.

Early in 1992, Algeria's leaders said the country was on the brink of civil war. After the state of emergency was decreed, desert internment camps set up, and death sentences passed, street violence switched to ambushes.

More than 200 members of the security forces were killed in such attacks last year. Since Jan. 1, at least 13 have been reported killed along with 31 fundamentalists.

FBI believes some Arab-Americans raising funds for Hamas group

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) believes some Arab-Americans are raising money for the political activities of Hamas, a Palestinian Muslim movement in the Israeli-occupied territories, but not for its military ones, U.S. officials said Monday.

Law enforcement agencies are monitoring several groups of Hamas supporters — among them in northern Virginia, in Dallas, in the Detroit and Chicago areas and in Tucson, Arizona — which are disseminating anti-Israel "propaganda" and raising funds for Palestinian welfare and religious causes, said one official.

But they dispute claims in the official Israeli media, given renewed voice following last week's arrest of three Arab-Americans in Israel, that Hamas' main command and control center is located in the United States.

"This is a great exaggeration," said one U.S. official familiar with the issue but who spoke only on condition of anonymity. The command and control of the military branch of Hamas, which Israel blames for the killings of at least 11 Israelis in the past four years, is in the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank, this official said.

Israel has detained two Arab-Americans from the Chicago area, accusing them of being sent to rebuild the hardline movement.

An Israeli security official told reporters the two men had given \$300,000 to operatives in the occupied territories and planned to distribute \$350,000 more. He

said documents about armed Hamas attacks were discovered among one of the men's possessions.

But a U.S. official said the majority of financial support for Hamas comes from religious foundations in Saudi Arabia, and some from the Iranian government.

In fact Iran, said the official who also asked not to be identified, has been trying to forge closer links with Hamas in recent months even though it practices the Shiite branch of Islam while Hamas follows the Sunni branch.

A small number of Hamas activists is receiving training in Lebanon from Iranian-backed Hizbollah guerrillas, said the official.

The movement, which was born in the poverty-ridden Gaza Strip in mid-1988, also gets money from Muslim fundamentalist groups in Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, Syria and other countries, he said.

In the United States, said a third official, supporters of Hamas have been trying in recent weeks to raise money for the

families of the 415 Palestinians expelled by Israel to southern Lebanon.

These groups, which often consist of nothing more than a post office box drop for contributions, are located in the metropolitan centres where many of this country's estimated three million Arab-Americans reside, officials said.

They vie for support against some of the more established Arab-American groups which are broadly affiliated with secular Palestinian groups, such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), they said.

Much of the activity of the Muslim fundamentalists in the United States is devoted to publishing, through leaflets and Arabic-language newspapers, Israeli abuses against the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

One such newspaper, Al Zaituna, is a monthly published in Dallas and distributed in many Middle Eastern restaurants and other institutions. It contains news of Palestinians arrested or beaten by Israeli troops, and cartoons and jokes that depict Jews in negatively.

Rabin asserts Israel has right to expel

(Continued from page 1)

Palestinian negotiations met European and U.S. diplomats Tuesday.

"We told them that if they issue invitations to the talks, they know our participation is suspended," Dr. Ezerkat told Reuters. "I'm afraid to say, regard-

less of what happens, we cannot continue the peace process before all the (expellees) return."

Mr. Ezerkat said his team wanted to resume talks but was under intense public pressure to demand immediate cancellation of all expulsions, as ordered by Resolution 799.

Flood of refugees taxes Greeks' tradition of hospitality

By Dina Kyriakidou
Reuters

LAVRIO, Greece — Hospitality is a tradition among Greeks. But a flood of hundreds of thousands of foreigners pouring into the country is trying their patience in these recessionary times.

Foreign ministry sources say there are an estimated 600,000 refugees in Greece, about six per cent of the population of the European Community's only Balkan member.

Others put the number at 400,000. All admit there is no accurate way to count them. Greece has a 1,017 kilometre mountainous northern border and dozens of islands in the east, making it nearly impossible to guard against illegal entry.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union refugees started pouring into Greece from Eastern Europe and poor northern Balkan countries. Officials say hundreds pass through every day from Albania

alone, with about 150 staying here daily.

Less than 100,000 are here legally — about 40,000 ethnic Greeks from Soviet republics and some 50,000 political refugees, mainly Turks, Kurds, Iraqis, Iranians, Ethiopians and Somalis.

"They have reached seven per cent of the work force of Greece while our unemployment keeps rising," said Deputy Foreign Minister Virginia Tsouderou. "It is a burden on our society."

Nowhere is this more evident than Lavrio, a small industrial port about 55 kilometres south of Athens, where unemployment has reached 70 per cent.

In a room at the Red Cross compound an elderly Iraqi Kurd kneels on his prayer mat, his two-year-old grandson jumps around him and several relatives sip sweet tea.

His son, a 25-year-old man called Abdullah, left Zakho in northern Iraq and bribed his way

into Greece after a year of hardship in Turkey.

"We paid 11 million Turkish lira, in 1989 about \$3,500, for the family to cross the Turkish-Greek border," Abdullah said.

His visiting friend Hasan, a 29-year-old Kurd from Antioch in Turkey who brought his wife and daughter into Greece the same year seems surprised. "That's cheap," he said.

Because of their asylum status they are housed in the centre, managed by the Red Cross and financed by the Greek government, with about 270 other refugees from Turkey and Iraq.

Despite the nearly decrepit state of the building and the apparent lack of basic amenities, the refugees say they are grateful to have a roof over their heads and food every day.

Others fleeing poverty, not persecution, are often seen sleeping on the streets of Athens, begging with a child in their arms or contributing to Greece's rapid-

ly increasing crime rate.

Although the Red Cross compound has been in Lavrio since the late 1940s, it is the first time residents have felt hostility towards the refugees, said Mayor Costas Pogas.

"They have worsened the unemployment problem because they work for less money. They just stand in the main square and people come by to pick them up for a few days' work," he added.

Foreign ministry sources say they fear this kind of animosity could get worse, creating the social tensions seen in other European countries.

"In northern Greek villages people sleep with shotguns at their bedside," one official said. Albanians have been involved in kinds of crime previously rare in Greece, he added.

Gang murders have become frequent and violent theft has increased. Athenians were shocked last year when two Albanians

stabbed an elderly commuter to death on a crowded bus for 2,000 drachmas (\$10).

"Every winter the problem gets worse. Things in Albania become difficult and they take advantage of the thick fog to cross the border," the official said.

Ms. Tsouderou said organised networks were arranging illegal entries from Albania and Turkey but their governments were not cooperating sufficiently to stop them.

"Albanians don't believe we have the right to protect our country from the spillover of their own economic catastrophe," she told Reuters. "Negotiating is difficult."

Turkey should also assume its responsibility in breaking up networks that have made big business out of trafficking in illegal immigrants to Greece, Ms. Tsouderou said.

Last October Greece and Turkey exchanged harsh words over 68 illegal Iraqi refugees who paid

for a Turkish boat to take them to the Greek island of Kos. They were stranded at sea for 18 days before Athens finally granted them temporary asylum.

An estimated 2,000 Iraqis arrived on Greece's eastern Aegean islands last year by way of Turkey. Few will be able to prove they were fleeing persecution.

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain the term refugee has become open to question. The United Nations definition corresponds to the cold war situation of political, racial and religious persecution.

"There is now a mass movement of people who do not fit in this definition," said Assane Samb, representative of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in Athens.

"There is a vacuum for these people," he said. "It is necessary for a collective political will to prevent the refugee problem. We must try to help people in their own country."

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Jordan takes on Iran in Davis Cup Friday

Senior ITF referee to officiate matches

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's national tennis team has by now completed its preparations for their upcoming three days of competition. They will play against Iran in their first round Asian Group 2 Davis Cup tie.

The draw for the Jordan-Iran tie will be held Thursday evening. Friday is the first day of competition as two singles matches will be played at the Sports Palace Court. The doubles match is scheduled for Saturday and the reverse singles for Sunday.

Representing Jordan are Hani Al Ali, Jordan's top-ranked player, second seeded Imad Abu Hamda, and the Azzouni brothers, Faris and Laith. The team captain is Talal Maher.

Iran's Davis Cup team, which arrived in Amman Monday includes players Mansour Bahrami, previously Iran's top-ranked player, Moharram Khodai and Mustafa Saleh — both experienced players who have represented Iran in previous competitions — and younger team members Mohammad Reza Tavakoli, and Ramin Golshani. The delegation also includes team captain Issa Khodai, administrator Abbas Golshani and team manager Nasser Mirzai.

The visiting team's officials told the Jordan Times that Iran's current top-ranked player Ombis Drafshijavan — who is also Bahrami's doubles partner — had not accompanied the delegation as he had lately missed practice. Bahrami, who now lives in Paris and mainly plays exhibition matches arrived in Amman Wednesday.

This year's Davis Cup tie against Iran promises tough and interesting matches as Jordan's Abu Hamda and Ali have previous experience and appeared in good form in the Jordan Tennis Championship which Ali won despite his loss to Abu Hamda in the third round.

"We have been preparing for these matches for quite some time. The players are ready to give their best. We hope we will win," Jordan's team captain told the Jordan

Times. Mr. Golshani, Iran's team administrator, confidently expressed his team's readiness saying: "We are well-prepared. We came to win."

Iran has only recently returned to Davis Cup competition after an absence of 14 years. They qualified for their tie last year in Bahrain by overcoming all their opponents.



Faris Al Azzouni

The winner of the Jordan-Iran tie will play the winner of the China-Malaysia match. Jordan will have to win one tie at least to stay in the Asian Group 2.

ITF Gold Badge referee to officiate matches

For the first time in Jordan's Davis Cup matches a referee with over 30 years of experience will be officiating the Jordan-Iran matches.

Jeremy Shales, a Briton, has travelled all over the world officiating at Grand Slams, the Davis Cup, the women's tour, the men's ATP tour, as well as the Olympic Games.

He first began umpiring at tennis' most prestigious event — Wimbledon — in 1960, and the Davis Cup since 1976.

As a freelance umpire, and throughout his thirty-year career as a professional International Tennis Federation (ITF) referee, Mr. Shales has travelled to over 60 countries to the Americas, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Australia.

He has so far umpired 7 Wimbledon finals. He also officiated in the 1987 Australian Open final, the 1988 Davis Cup final as well as the 1988 Seoul Olympics, the 1990

Wimbledon men's final and the 1992 Barcelona Olympics.

In an interview with the Jordan Times Mr. Shales recollected some memorable matches at which he officiated.

"The most memorable one at Wimbledon was the match which tennis writers and commentators still refer to as the greatest ever played. It was the 1977 semifinal in which Bjorn Borg played Vitas Gerulaitis. A five-set brilliant match," said Mr. Shales, adding: "I'd like to watch it sometime."

"Another memorable match is the 1978 women's final at Wimbledon when Martina Navratilova overcame Chris Evert to win her first title."

Mr. Shales, who has officiated at tennis' major events and has seen the world's top players throughout his career, says Davis Cup is always interesting because little known players and countries are trying to play their best to upset advanced ones, so there's always tough competition.

"There are different levels in Davis Cup. Lower ranked countries sometimes produce exciting ties since in a five-set match it is a matter of wearing down your opponent. Therefore the fittest wins," commented Mr. Shales.

"People have different ideas about the Davis Cup however. They all know about the World Group in which top players like Jim Courier, Boris Becker and Andre Agassi compete.



Jeremy Shales



Hani Al Ali

But what people don't realise is that over 100 nations play in the Davis Cup and everybody has a chance. It is one of the biggest sporting events in the world."

Mr. Shales recounted how one employee was surprised when he realised that his reason for wanting to obtain a visa for Jordan was for the Davis Cup match. "Davis Cup? Is Jordan? Who's playing?" He was asked.

"Standards vary. But it's always challenging and surprises can happen at the Davis Cup," said Mr. Shales citing the example of Switzerland reaching the finals in 1992 while one time champions Germany were eliminated in the first round.

"The home-tie advantage is also an interesting aspect of the Davis Cup," added Mr. Shales. The home country has the choice of venue and surface, which can make a big difference even to the most seasoned players."

Mr. Shales pointed out that the development of tennis in the world revolves around tournaments like the Davis Cup. "The ITF is working on the promotion of tennis from the basic levels. Teaching the young and developing a grass-roots interest is what will enhance the game in any country."

SPORTS NEWS IN BRIEF

Ferrari warns it could quit Formula One

ROME (R) — Ferrari president Luca Di Montezemolo has warned that the Italian team could quit Formula One racing unless the rules are changed to bring the sport back to its manufacturing roots. "There is nothing forcing us to remain in F1, which must change its rules absolutely to return closer to the technology of mass-produced cars," Italian newspapers Wednesday quoted Di Montezemolo as saying. "The technological level has reached a point where 95 per cent of the solutions which can be applied to racing cars cannot be passed on to the product," Di Montezemolo was quoted as telling a meeting of businessmen in the city of Bologna. "Ferrari will never stop racing... but if things do not change quickly we would also opt for other types of competition," he added.

Russian sprinter breaks 50 metres world record

MOSCOW (R) — Russian Olympic medalist Irina Privalova Tuesday twice broke the 50 metres world indoor record, one of the longest-standing in women's athletics. Privalova clocked 6.05 seconds in a semifinal at the "Russian winter" competitions in Moscow, breaking the mark of 6.11 set by East German Marita Koch 13 years ago to the day in Grenoble, France. In the final, Privalova, 100 metres bronze medalist at the Barcelona Games, shaved a further five-hundredths of a second off the record, reducing it to 6.00.

Graf goes through, Sabatini out with flu

YOKOHAMA (R) — Half the seeds were out of the running by the end of round one in the Toray Pan-Pacific Open tennis tournament Wednesday. Illness forced defending champion Gabriela Sabatini to withdraw and number six seed Mary Pierce of France retired hurt, while Helena Sukova and Lori McNeil, seeded seventh and eighth, both lost. Top seed Steffi Graf, in her first match since losing the Australian Open final to Monica Seles Saturday, beat Japan's Kimiko Date 6-1 7-5. "I'm more sorry than you are that I have to pull out, because I wanted to defend my title," said a somewhat shaky Sabatini. The Argentine won here in 1987, 1991 and 1992 and was gunning for an unprecedented third consecutive victory.

Rangers snatch victory, Blackburn lose again

LONDON (R) — Aberdeen's hopes of taking the Scottish title all but disappeared Tuesday when they were beaten 1-0 at home by League leaders Glasgow Rangers. Aberdeen dominated much of the Premier Division game but Rangers' Scottish international goalkeeper Andy Goran produced a string of fine saves to keep the home side out. Former England striker Mark Hateley snatched both points for Rangers with a headed goal in the 58th minute. Blackburn were dealt an equally crushing blow to their diminishing hopes of winning the English Premier League title in their first season back in the top division when suffering their third successive defeat, 2-1 at home to Crystal Palace.

Lendl opens indoor season with win

MARSEILLE (R) — Top seed Ivan Lendl was well below his best but still opened the indoor season with a straight sets victory over Dane Kenneth Carlsen at the \$500,000 Marseille Open Tuesday. Naturalised American Lendl, who lost in the first round of the Australian Open last month to Sweden's Christian Bergstrom, beat Carlsen, ranked 64th in the world, 6-3 6-4.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY FEBRUARY 5, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation
GENERAL TENDENCIES: If you need to let off steam today, try bowling — or roller-skating. If you're unmotivated, consciously, you may be in for a pleasant surprise at a sporting event tonight.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Be off and away to whatever excites and interests your curiosity combined with your desire to get ahead in a more purposeful, dynamic fashion.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You can be more direct in going after the increased benefits you are inspired to make an actual part of your existence so don't loiter, action.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Much comes into the open of worldly nature that give you the chance to show off your capabilities so they will be appreciated by the public.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Don't put off whatever you have agreed to do and find you have the energy and the electronics to perform all matters in an efficient manner.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Be in touch with whatever companions are available who enjoy the same recreations and entertainments as yourself and arrange good times for the future.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You will be a little inclined to be too demanding at home today

but if you sugar coat anything you say or do it can be a great day at home.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Communications to and from others should be particularly beneficial now so get on the phone or go see those you like and cement bonds of concord.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A day of all sorts of benefits accruing from your following up leads whereby you can add to your income and holdings so think big, get big.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are overflowing with zeal, energy and charm now and it would be wise to utilize it to your advantage by going after your personal aims.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You need to expand your horizon and your consciousness if you want to have the success of which you are capable so go after big results.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is certainly your day to live up to your sign of being a gregarious Aquarius so be in touch with all friends and acquaintances and enjoy them.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) There is much action in the world of outside activity for you so make sure you see and are seen in public for others will now recognize your best points.

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Both vulnerable. South deals.

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♥ 8 4 3

♦ A K J 8

WEST ♠ Void EAST ♠ Q 10 9

♥ K J 10 7 5 2 ♥ Q 9 4 3

♦ K Q J 5 ♦ 10 9 2

♣ 10 6 3 ♣ Q 9 2

SOUTH ♠ A 9 8 4 2

♥ A 8

♦ A 7 6

♣ 7 5 4

The bidding:

South West North East

1 ♠ 2 ♥ 3 ♥ Pass

3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass

Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

In life, we feel you would do well to choose as your partner an optimist rather than a pessimist. At the bridge table, the opposite is probably true.

North's three-heart cue-bid showed a limit raise or better in spades. With a minimum opening bid, South simply rebid spades and North had more than enough to proceed to game. Note that East-West had a profitable sacrifice at five hearts, but we can't fault East for not bidding at any vulnerability.

West led the king of diamonds.

and declarer, an incurable optimist, reckoned on no loser in trumps or hearts and two in diamonds, so the club finesse presented the possibility of an overtrick. This dream was shattered when, after winning the first trick with the ace of diamonds, declarer cashed the ace of spades and West discarded a heart.

Rather than rely on a club finesse, declarer tried for an endplay by conceding a diamond. West won and shrewdly shifted to a club, taken in dummy. West won the diamond continuation and reverted to clubs, forcing declarer to finesse. Down one.

A more pessimistic declarer would allow West to win the first trick. If West continues with a diamond, declarer wins, tests trumps, cashes the ace of hearts and ruffs a heart, then takes the ace of diamonds and exits with a diamond. After winning the club return in dummy, declarer cashes the remaining high trump and then throws East in with the queen of spades. East must either lead a club into the tenace or yield a ruff-duck, in either case conceding the contract.

What if West shifts to a club at trick two? Declarer takes the diamond and can later discard a diamond on the 13th club, again romping home with 10 tricks.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY FEBRUARY 4, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation
GENERAL TENDENCIES: Not the best aspects for initiating self-improvement programmes as lunar aspects are excessively encountered. Be willing to shift from your position today and you'll avoid unnecessary headaches.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) All kinds of new energy inspires you to go after what you want but in the midst of the activity an older person gets in the way for the moment but soon you get much of value done.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Be direct in going after a more efficient way to handle your life and continue to do so despite some momentary halt for good action again follows.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Go along in a positive manner with an associate having ideas that you see benefits from and don't let an old obligation keep you from putting full effort into it.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You find enthusiasm towards whatever your duties can make them easier to put in motion and with better results so carry through.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Your instincts are good early for knowing how to best put your talents in motion so don't let one who questions them deter you from full speed ahead in presenting your ideas.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Make a point to use that good

judgment now yours to do what will increase the wellbeing of yourself and your family, avoid a limiting condition.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Be more outspoken and direct in letting those you come in contact know where they can best fit into your plans and ignore one who is a pessimist.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You awaken with some excellent ideas for adding to your abundance so put your views into motion right away and reap the material potential benefits.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Consider well the various personal wishes that most activate you and go after them with courage, confidence and ability and they are yours.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You are gleeful about a private matter you feel that you can work out to your complete satisfaction and you can if you plug away at it.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You want to see as many friends and acquaintances as possible and this is just the day to start arrangements for moments to see them early in the day.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) A good day for you to be out in the world of people and interests early and to spend as much of the day and evening building up worldly success.

THE BETTER HALF.

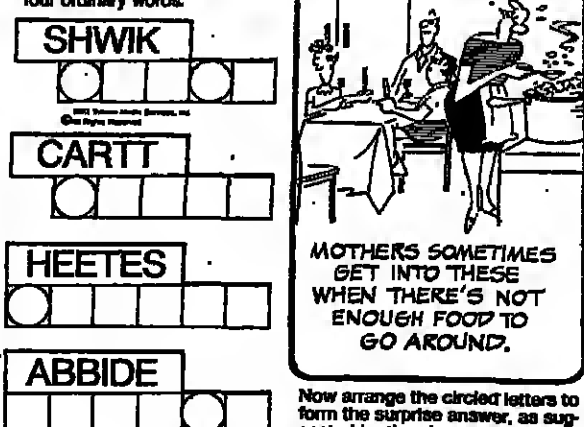
By Harris



"I'm making breakfast in bed. Crank up the electric blanket!"

JUMBLE.

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



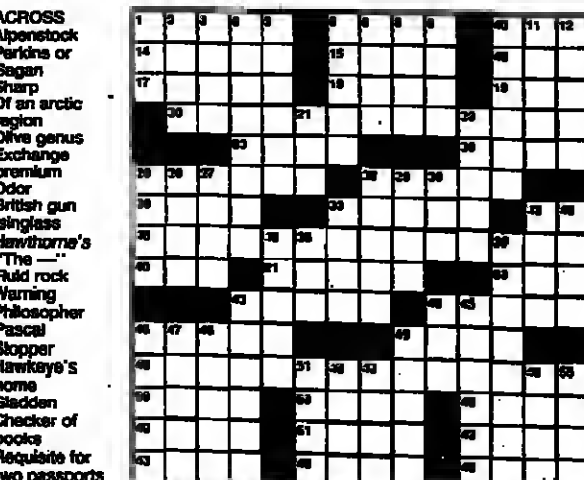
Print answer here: _____

Yesterday's Jumbles: FLOOD · OCTET · BALLAD · COSTLY

Answer: In their work, this is how many mail carriers get ahead—AFOOT

THE Daily Crossword

by James Barrick



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solver:



Wilkins becomes Hawks all-time scorer

ATLANTA (R) — Dominique Wilkins scored 34 points to become the all-time scoring leader in Hawks history as Atlanta beat the Seattle SuperSonics 118-109 Tuesday.

Wilkins hit a layup midway through the fourth quarter to move past hall of famer Bob Pettit on the Hawks scoring list with 20,881 points.

Mookie Blaylock added 19 points and 11 assists as the Hawks won for the fourth time in five games.

Shawn Kemp scored 35 points

and Ricky Pierce added 19 for Seattle, which lost for the fourth time in five games.

Mark Jackson had 24 points, 11 rebounds and nine assists to lead the Clippers to a 112-108 victory over Phoenix.

Kevin Johnson had 23 points to pace the Suns, who had their six-game winning streak stopped.

The Trail Blazers, second in the Pacific Division behind Phoenix, also fell Tuesday when they were upset by the Minnesota Timberwolves to Portland, 104-91.

The San Antonio Spurs regained sole possession of first place in the Midwest Division with their 12th to 13 games, a 111-93 thrashing of the visiting New Jersey Nets.

Dale Ellis scored 24 points and David Robinson had 17 points and 12 rebounds as the Spurs improved to 17-3 since John Lucas took over from Jerry Tarkanian as head coach.

The Atlantic Division-leading New York Knicks handed the last place Washington bolts their third straight defeat with a 105-

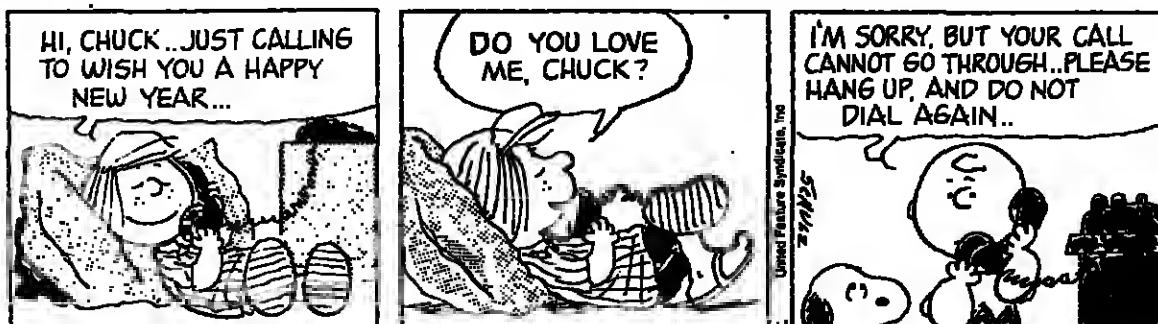
100 win at Madison Square Garden.

John Starks scored seven of his 28 points in the final two minutes to secure the victory.

In Houston, Hakeem Olajuwon, NBA player of the month for January, scored 31 points as the Rockets cooled off the Indiana Pacers 115-104.

At Cleveland, Gerald Wilkins scored a season-high 28 points as the Cavaliers got back on the winning track at the expense of the struggling golden State Warriors.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



Air bargains, dollar lure Americans to Europe

CHICAGO (R) — Bargain air fares and a bargain dollar exchange rate are tempting Americans to think about April in Paris, U.S. travel industry officials have said.

"They ask if it's (European travel) expensive and we say no more expensive than New York City," said Cathy Sadekian, an agent at Brenco Travel in Overland Park, Kansas.

"We've sensed an increase," in European travel bookings, she said in an interview. "It all goes hand-in-hand with lower fares as the first stimulus — that coupled with the dollar."

Many carriers are currently offering a \$448 round-trip fare from Chicago to London, Paris and even Rome, provided the ticket is bought by Feb. 9 and travel begins by March 17. The price is lower than some travel

from point to point within the United States.

Michael Bouquier, chairman of the European Travel Commission, a travel promotion coalition in New York, said "everybody reports a major increase in inquiries. It's far better than last year. For France alone we've had a significant increase in requests by mail and at the desk."

Americans are becoming more optimistic about the U.S. economy, he said, and air fares are "very attractive."

"The sophisticated repeat traveler, and that's seven out of every 10, knows that the dollar is 10 to 15 percent higher than last year at the same time, so Europe is 10 to 15 percent cheaper now than it was a year ago," Mr. Bouquier said in an interview.

Kuwait central bank has doubts on graft law

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's central bank said Tuesday a new anti-corruption law was well-intentioned but could take business away from state-linked investment institutions.

Governor Salem Abdul Aziz Al Saud Al Salem said borrowers nervous about publicity might avoid banks and investment houses covered by the law, which gives parliament the right to monitor dealings by state-linked investment groups.

"There will be a shift from the borrowers' side, not to borrow from those banks and investment companies and approach other banks who are not under the umbrella of this law," he said in an interview.

"I fully support the objectives behind this law. No one can deny the nobility of such objectives," he said. "But in practical terms I think a lot of technical matters will arise."

Parliament, anxious to prevent a repetition of massive losses from investments in Spain, last month approved a law stiffening the penalties for embezzlement.

The legislation is expected to take effect this month.

The law requires the state and companies in which the state has at least a 25 per cent stake to report investment transactions to the government's auditing authorities, in some cases within 10 days of carrying them out.

Audit authorities will not have the power to block investments but every six months they will be required to report on the state's investment activities to parliament.

The law raises the maximum sentence for misuse of public funds to life imprisonment from 10 years and the minimum penalty to five years from a fine.

Sheikh Salem said borrowers would not want details of their loans revealed and some lenders might become reluctant to do business with potential clients out of an unjustified fear of future losses.

"There will be so much reluctance and the decision (to lend or not) will not be on a credit basis," he said.

He said dealers making

thousands of daily deals for investment bodies might have fears of routine losses recorded as a misuse of public money.

"A loss means you have provided an opportunity for a loss and therefore you must be questioned, interrogated and so forth, and who knows what will happen later?" Sheikh Salem said.

Emotions are running high in the emirate over revelations of suspected corruption in the management of parts of the country's estimated \$40 billion foreign investment portfolio.

State prosecutors have been investigating allegations of fraud in London-based Kuwait Investment Office's (KIO) Spanish arm Grupo Torras, which collapsed last year with losses of \$5 billion, and state-owned Kuwait Oil Tanker Company.

The government said also that the central bank sought a balanced solution to the emirate's \$20 billion bad debt problem that maximised repayments but avoided worsening the sluggish economy.

Sheikh Salem said a solution

that resulted in debtors liquidating major assets in Kuwait could harm the economy. But debtors who failed to follow any future repayment plan would face legal action, he added.

"When we talk in principle, professionally speaking, a debtor must pay 100 per cent," he said in the interview.

"But when you look at a solution where you are not only after debtors but you want your economy to start developing, an immediate payment of 100 per cent definitely could hurt the economy," he explained.

"There should be some kind of balanced approach whereby you collect as much as you can and at the same time give a solution the room to activate the different economic sectors," he added.

He said completion of a plan to bail Kuwaiti commercial banks out of chronic bad debt problems — stemming both from the 1982 collapse of the Souq Al Manakh stock market and the 1990 Iraqi invasion — would give a "sharp" improvement to the economy.

Resurgent oil production and

post-Gulf war oil and defence spending has yet to boost a stagnant economy hit by worries over Iraq, a drop in population and delays in the bad debt plan.

In the first phase of the plan, the government last year swapped \$20 billion of the bank's portfolios of dubious loans for rock-solid treasury bonds which mature in 20 years.

Under the delayed second phase, debtors disclose their financial positions to the central bank while repayment terms are agreed by parliament in cooperation with the government.

Few have made disclosures because under current proposals repayment terms are linked to assets, a condition that has encouraged big borrowers to keep funds parked safely abroad.

The problem for the banks is that until repayment terms are agreed and repayments started, their most important customer will be the government, which pays only five per cent interest.

That rate is at least two percentage points lower than the yield on other local investment instru-

ments, presenting banks with the prospect of stagnant earnings and minimal profitability as long as the bad debt problem remains unsolved.

Parliament last week extended by three months an end of January deadline for debtors' disclosures to allow more time to members of parliament to hammer out a solution.

Parliament's finance committee has proposed a two-tier solution giving easy terms to the 9,311 debtors who owe a total of 1.874 billion dinars. The terms would in some cases include forgiving an individual as much as 70 per cent of his debt.

The committee wants tougher terms for the 235 who owe the remaining 3,995 billion dinars, the bulk of the debt, although economists expect some debt forgiveness even for this group.

Sheikh Salem said different repayment terms for the two groups was a likely solution, but overly tough terms for either group could harm firms hit by Iraq's seven-month occupation.

North Korea 'seeks to barter with southern firms'

SEOUL (R) — Communist North Korea, suffering from a shortage of food, crude oil and foreign exchange, has offered barter deals with South Korea's major trading companies, news reports have said.

State radio and the Yonhap domestic news agency quoted industry sources as saying North Korea had asked southern traders for help in buying grain and crude from third countries in exchange for natural resources, including zinc ingot and steel products.

The north had asked branches in Hong Kong and Peking of four southern firms — Samsung Co. Ltd., Daewoo Corp., Hyundai Corp. and Lucky-Goldstar International Corp. — to arrange such deals since early last year but had increased its requests since November, the news reports said, noting the sources.

A Samsung spokesman denied the reports, but said: "We heard other big trading firms received such offers from North Korea."

Confirmation by the other three companies and by government officials was not immediately available.

North Korea's rigidly planned economy, long propped up by cheap loans and supplies of oil and manufactured goods from communist allies, has been devastated by the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1991.

Since then, the north has sought economic aid from its rich neighbours and even from the south, with which it remains technically at war after the bitter 1950-53 Korean conflict.

Seoul officials said Peking, one of Pyongyang's few remaining principal allies and paymasters, recently demanded that North Korea compensate it in hard currencies for crude oil imports from China. Seoul and Peking normalised relations last August.

Insurers respond to global warming — Greenpeace

LONDON (R) — The world insurance industry is taking global warming seriously and pulling out of some areas prone to cyclones and freak weather conditions, the environmental lobby group Greenpeace said Wednesday.

"There is a tremendous amount of governmental and business scepticism when it comes to climate change but the insurance industry... is taking it seriously," Jeremy Leggett, author of a Greenpeace report on climate change and the insurance industry, said in a statement.

The report, which draws on evidence gathered by the industry itself, says insurance cover is no longer available for certain risks, especially cyclone damage to

bousses in some Pacific islands and parts of the Caribbean.

"Today new homeowners in western Samoa and Hawaii are being left uninsured. Tomorrow the same could apply to a lot of infrastructure around the Florida and Gulf (of Mexico) coasts," Mr. Leggett said.

The Greenpeace report argues that the unprecedented spate of natural catastrophes between 1987 and 1992 was due to global warming caused by the build-up of gases such as carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels.

Insurers suffered big losses in this period from industrial accidents and natural disasters, beginning with the European windstorm of 1987 and including U.S. hurricanes Hugo in 1988 and

Andrew in 1992.

Hugo resulted in insured losses of more than \$5 billion, while the cost of Andrew to the industry is well in excess of \$10 billion and has led to the collapse of several reinsurers.

In the face of this rash of claims, insurers have had to change their approach to risk assessment, even though the debate continues both as to whether or not the world is getting warmer, and if so, what is causing it.

"We are not scientists, but if you look at what is happening out there, at the actual losses, there is a problem... the body of scientific opinion appears to be saying it is getting worse," Richard Keeling, an underwriter at the world's largest insurance market, Lloyd's

of London, told Reuters.

The industry has responded to the increased frequency and size of catastrophe claims by increasing premiums and tightening up policy conditions. Underwriters say that only in a few cases can risks no longer be insured at all.

"Round the world prices are going up because of these events," Mr. Keeling said, adding that this commercial pressure could eventually force governments to act if climate change is found to be caused by human activity.

Insurers said the recent sharp rise in British home-owners insurance policies was due partly to claims arising from the European storms of 1987 and 1990, each of which was described by weather

experts at the time as a once in 300 years event.

Higher rates can also be traced to another trend linked to climate change — the rise in subsidence claims following several years of drought in southern England, underwriters said.

A spokesman for the Association of British Insurers (ABI) said the industry was studying the impact of freak weather conditions in Britain in recent years, but added that experts could not yet agree on the extent of the problem.

"Whether it's a climatic blip, or man-made, we don't know. We're dealing with the weather, and there's nothing more uncertain than that," he said.

Worried business leaders call for stronger EC leadership

BRUSSELS (R) — Europe's business leaders, shaken by the economic recession, currency turmoil and doubts about the European Community's (EC's) future, are clamouring for some strong political leadership.

The industry heads are worried about the slowdown in the push to monetary union and the remaining gaps in the EC's single market programme, and want to see some visionary thinking to get the faltering European integration process back on track.

"If you find optimism prevailing, you're speaking to people I don't speak to," said Etienne Davignon, chairman of Societe Generale de Belgique and a former member of the EC's executive European Commission.

"This sense of gloom and difficulty certainly impedes dynamism," he said.

Mr. Davignon said national leaders were preoccupied with domestic politics and taking a

"business as usual" approach during a time of profound change.

"It is time we acknowledged we should fight again for Europe if we do not want to accept that Europe falls into the petty spirit of the past," Edvard Reuter, chairman of the board of Daimler-Benz A.G., said in a speech last month.

Mr. Reuter decried Europe's "growing provincialism", citing examples from anti-foreigner violence in Germany to the exemptions granted to Denmark and Britain from the Maastricht treaty on European union.

Those two countries have still not ratified the treaty, slowing down the move toward a common currency which is dear to the hearts of many business leaders.

The European industry federation UNICE argues that Brussels, in the form of the 17-member commission, is critical to restoring investor confidence in

Europe's economy.

It sent a memorandum to the commission, which took office in January, urging a renewed push for economic and monetary union, speedy ratification of the Maastricht treaty and full implementation of the single market.

"We see the role of the commission as absolutely crucial in creating a new Europe," said UNICE Secretary-General Zygmunt Tyskiewicz. "This cannot be done by individual member states. We don't want the wind taken out of the commission's sails."

UNICE officials, who met EC President Jacques Delors Tuesday, planned to reassure him that business was "still on the side of Europe." This has been brought home by recent trade conflicts with the United States, he said. "We need a very strong community to be able to answer back," Mr. Tyskiewicz said.

France tops foreign investors in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) — France was the top foreign investor in Malaysia last year, followed by the United States, then Japan, a government report has said.

France's capital investment totaled 4.08 billion ringgit (\$1.632 billion) for 1992, consisting of five projects, including a four billion ringgit (\$1.6 billion) investment by Societe National Elf Aquitaine to produce petroleum-based products.

The United States almost doubled its investments to 3.30 billion ringgit (\$1.32 billion) from 1.79 billion ringgit (\$716 million) the previous year, according to the International Trade and Industry Ministry annual report. Most of the investments were in joint-venture projects for petroleum refining.

Japan invested 2.63 billion ringgit (\$1.052 billion) in 1992, followed by Australia, then Taiwan, which had been the biggest investor in 1991.

Czechs, Slovaks scrap common currency

PRAGUE (R) — The Czech and Slovak governments announced Tuesday they had agreed to abolish the Czechoslovak crown as their common currency and begin using their own money from next Monday.

The end of the short-lived monetary union between the newly-independent Czech and Slovak republics came after legislators in both capitals voted overwhelmingly in favour of using separate money.

Announcing the split on Czech television, Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus said citizens would have four days — from Thursday to Sunday — to change old banknotes for bills with Czech markings at the ratio of 1:1.

Mr. Klaus's Slovak counterpart, Vladimir Meciar, appeared on Slovak television at the same time to make a similar statement. Payments between the Czech and Slovak republics were halted Wednesday, Czech National Bank spokesman Martin Svehla told the national news agency CTK.

Suspension of payments — both direct and through banks, savings banks and post offices — would last until Sunday.

In the same period, the transport of money, stocks, bills and cheques across the border would be banned, Mr. Svehla said. Exchange offices would stop selling hard currency to Czech citizens.

Mr. Klaus said the decision to scrap the common currency had been taken to stop speculation and end uncertainty over the future of the crown in the two republics and with their trading partners abroad.

Britain's housing market remains depressed

LONDON (R) — Britain's recession-hit housing market is still in the doldrums with prices falling and mortgage lending on the wane, two surveys showed Wednesday.

The Halifax Building Society, Britain's biggest mortgage-lending agency, said its monthly house price index showed a 0.5 per cent fall in January after a 0.4 per cent drop in December as the recent pattern of weakening prices continued.

Lending for house purchase is also slack with gross advances down to £10.4 billion (\$15.4 billion) in the fourth quarter of last year from £15.3 billion (\$22.4 billion) in the third quarter, the Council of Mortgage Lenders said.

The housing market has been badly hit by a two-year recession and lending has halved since the

boom times of the late 1980s.

"1992 marked the fourth successive year of declining mortgage activity," said Mark Boleat, director general of the mortgage lenders council.

Net new lending for the year at £17.8 billion (\$26 billion), was less than half the level in 1988 and broadly mirrored the reduction in the number of property transactions over the period, he said.

He noted that consumer confidence was badly hit in the latter part of last year by financial-market turbulence which centred on sterling's withdrawal from the European Community's exchange rate Mechanism (ERM) in September.

But both Mr. Boleat and the Halifax were more hopeful for the future given the sharp reduction in interest rates since sterling left the ERM.

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One U.S. dollar	1.2633/38	Canadian dollar	1.6440/50
	1.8475/85	Dutch guilders	1.5295/305
	33.85/89	Swiss francs	5.5650/750
	1528/1533	Belgian francs	124.43/48
	124.43/48	French francs	7.4625/725
	6.9850/950	Italian lire	6.3725/825
	6.3725/825	Japanese yen	1.4270/80
One sterling	\$329.40/329.90	Norwegian crowns	
One ounce of gold		Danish crowns	

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Nabil Al Mashini Theatre

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Tickets office open all day

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Free Car Parking

PLAZA Tel.: 699238

Pasic Instinct

Starring: Michael Douglas and Sharol Stone

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

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Phnom Penh's artillery is within range of Pailin

TRENG, Cambodia (R) — Phnom Penh's army has moved artillery and tanks within shelling range of Khmer Rouge guerrilla headquarters at Pailin in far west Cambodia, but U.N. military observers do not expect an all-out infantry assault.

Treng, 45 kilometres southwest of Battambang, was once the site of a thriving village, but is now home to only a company of U.N. peacekeepers from Malaysia and the headquarters staff of Phnom Penh's 4th Army Division.

It lies on strategic Route 10 linking Battambang with Pailin, 28 kilometres to the west, the centre of a gem-mining district that continues to finance Khmer Rouge operations.

U.N. military observers told Reuters during a visit to Treng Tuesday that fighting had increased in their district, but played down reports of a large-scale Phnom Penh offensive against Khmer Rouge positions.

"Phnom Penh have sent tanks to the frontlines north of Treng. The NADK (National Army of Democratic Kampuchea, or Khmer Rouge) are reportedly using four tanks," Major Zahir Bessad, an Algerian military observer said.

Six kilometres south Route 10 towards Pailin, the dirt road enters into a narrow and deeply rutted track infested with land mines and safe to walk only when accompanied by local Phnom Penh soldiers.

In the distance the blue-green hills surrounding the guerrilla lair at Pailin are clearly visible through a smoke haze caused by peasants burning off rice stubble.

According to Mr. Bessad, shelling by both sides has been heavy here for a week.

"Yesterday, it was shelling all day since 6:15 a.m. along all the

front," he said Sunday.

"It was the NADK attacking," he said.

Mr. Bessad said it was difficult to verify Phnom Penh claims about the fighting because the U.N. military observers were currently unable to visit the most advanced frontline positions.

The U.N. deployed 22,000 troops in March 1992 to oversee a return to peace after 12 years of civil war. The Khmer Rouge, which with two allied guerrilla groups battled the government until a 1991 peace pact, has refused to disarm its fighters or take part in U.N.-organised elections due in May.

Mr. Bessad said local Phnom Penh military strength in Treng district was estimated to be 500 soldiers, an average figure for a government army division.

Colonel Arshad, the Malaysian U.N. military commander for Battambang province, said no increase in the number of troops in the area had been detected and dismissed the idea that Phnom Penh was planning a large-scale assault against Pailin.

"They'd have to make use of the road for armour and logistics," he told Reuters. "We haven't seen that yet."

In Phnom Penh, U.N. officials said the fighting around Pailin was the heaviest in what they said appeared to be a coordinated offensive by the Phnom Penh government forces against the Khmer Rouge in five western and central provinces.

The number of Phnom Penh troops fighting in the four other provinces was said to be small both by the U.N. officials and Phnom Penh government spokesmen.

A Reuters correspondent heard incoming artillery fired from Khmer Rouge positions when he

visited the forward position earlier this week.

"We know they're using 122mm and 85mm to shell this position here," Mr. Bessad said.

The rounds passed overhead and exploded harmlessly in the distance away from the government position.

The Phnom Penh artillery was quick to reply. A salvo of four outgoing 130mm rounds was fired back at the Khmer Rouge.

The 130mm field gun is the biggest and most accurate in the Phnom Penh arsenal and is greatly feared by the Khmer Rouge. It is capable of lobbing high explosives a distance of 28 kilometres placing Pailin within easy range, Mr. Bessad said.

The U.N. military observers accompanied by a squad of Malaysian peacekeepers drove off in search of the offending battery and soon located the position, hidden in a nearby gully just off Route 10.

The battery consisted of one 130mm field gun, an 85mm howitzer and a 122mm gun.

Its eight man crew had made ready six rounds for firing when the U.N. officers asked that the Phnom Penh officer in charge cease fire.

The officer was in direct communication with local army headquarters via walkie talkie and was plotting firing coordinates on a map overlooking the battery site.

He told the observers that he had been ordered to fire six shells in retaliation for the Khmer Rouge firing.

"What they're (Phnom Penh) up to I've no idea really," Mr. Bessad said.

Phnom Penh Prime Minister Hun Sen Tuesday night told reporters in Phnom Penh that his army's attacks had ceased, but



Government artillery men diffuse live 130mm artillery shells following a short fire mission against Khmer Rouge forces at Khmer Rouge headquarters in Pailin 27kms to the east of Treng (AFP photo)

that troops would not withdraw from new frontline positions.

Yasushi Akashi, the head of the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia, said he would consider a Phnom Penh proposal that U.N. soldiers take up buffer positions between the two armies.

China Wednesday criticised the Phnom Penh government for the attacks on Khmer Rouge guerrillas and asked U.N. authorities in Cambodia to take action.

"We are deeply concerned over this development," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

"We disapprove of any action which runs counter to the Paris (peace) agreement and hope that the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) will take concrete measures to prevent the situation from getting worse," the spokesman said in a statement distributed by Xinhua News Agency.

2nd white S. African MP defects to Zulu party

CAPE TOWN (R) — Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party gained a second white representative in parliament Tuesday.

Mike Tarr, a Liberal Democratic Party member of parliament for 10 of the past 12 years, followed the example of Jurie Mentz, who quit the ruling National Party Friday to join Inkatha.

Mr. Tarr said in a statement it was time for white South Africans to "walk the extra yard and join predominantly black political organisations."

"It is unrealistic to expect black South Africans in large numbers to join what have been predominantly white political parties and part of the white-minority power system," he said.

Mr. Tarr and Mr. Mentz have both said they support Chief Buthelezi's call for a South African Federation with extensive powers almost amounting to independence for regions like Natal province.

Inkatha is the major conservative force in black politics and

poses the main challenge to Nelson Mandela's African National Congress.

Five members of the Democratic Party resigned last week to join the ANC. They have stayed on in parliament as independents unofficially representing the ANC.

Mr. Mentz said last week he would formally represent Inkatha after Chief Buthelezi offered him an immediate seat on the Zulu party's Central Committee.

Meanwhile, angry taxi drivers stoned buses and attacked bus drivers in Soweto, South Africa's biggest black township, Wednesday and police were trying to stop the protest spreading into central Johannesburg.

"There was an escalation in blockades and attacks on buses all over Soweto this morning," said police Captain Joseph Ngobeni. Witnesses said armed police were out in force in Soweto to try to stop taxi drivers from driving minibuses into central Johannesburg which they have been blockading for the past two days.

Croat troops appear to be pushing deeper into Krajina

ZAGREB (R) — Croatian troops appeared to be pushing deeper into the Serb-occupied Krajina enclave Wednesday as a nearby port called off a red alert for the first time since they stormed into the region 13 days ago.

Serb rebel sources said a high-ranking U.N. Peacekeeping Force (UNPROFOR) official was expected in Krajina's main city Knin with messages from Geneva peace mediators Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen.

But a UNPROFOR spokesman said deputy commander Cedric Thornberry was involved in meetings at headquarters in Zagreb Wednesday and did not know if he indeed planned to visit.

Croatian troops swarmed over a year-old U.N. truce line into Krajina, a mountainous region stretching inland from the Adriatic, on Jan. 22 in anger at fruitless U.N. efforts to disarm its Serbs and reinstate Zagreb's sovereignty there.

President Franjo Tudjman's nationalist government has said the offensive's goals have been

achieved — a key transport junction, a strategic airport inland from Zadar Port and the Peruca hydro-electric dam in Krajina's far south.

But the fighting has intensified in recent days after Serb rebels counter-attacked with reinforcements from Serbia proper and spurned any truce without a wholesale Croatian withdrawal, a demand unacceptable to Zagreb.

The unyielding posture of both sides raised the spectre of prolonged inconclusive warfare along Krajina's ragged front.

But in an apparent sign Wednesday that Croatian troops were driving the Serbs inland beyond artillery range of the coast, Zadar dropped the general alarm it raised at the outset of the advance over the truce line 10 kilometres east.

Serb-Muslim artillery and infantry clashes continued around the Serb-besieged Bosnian capital and in northeastern Bosnia Wednesday, Muslim-led Sarajevo Radio and the Serbian-controlled Belgrade News Agency Tanjug reported.

Ghali shuffles top jobs at U.N. secretariat

UNITED NATIONS (R) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has reshuffled top jobs for peacekeeping, political affairs and the U.N. office in Geneva in a Tuesday announcement that took key posts from a Ghanaian.

He replaced the post of undersecretary-general for the Peacekeeping Department, supervising 30 troops around the world, with a British.

Mr. Marrack Gouding, a British, who will become undersecretary-general for political affairs. A Briton had been in charge of peacekeeping for decades.

Mr. Gouding replaces Russian Vladimir Petrovsky, who will be director-general of the United Nations Office in Geneva.

Mr. Petrovsky replaces Antoine Bianca of France, current head of the Geneva operation, who will leave the United Nations and return to service in the French government.

The changes will take effect on March 1.

U.N. sources speculated that Dr. Ghali wanted to enhance the Political Department with Mr. Gouding, feeling he might have more success than the current head. Although Mr. Petrovsky is a respected Russian diplomat, officials said his nationality often worked against him in negotiations.

Others believed that mounting pressure for the United Nations to use limited military force figured into Dr. Ghali's thinking to name a new peacekeeping chief.

Mr. Annan is currently serving as assistant secretary-general under Mr. Gouding in the Peacekeeping Department. Before that he was in the office of human resources management and controller in the office of Planning, Budget and Finance.

Dr. Ghali also has not yet announced a successor to former Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, who resigned his post as undersecretary-general in the Department of Administration and Management. But U.N. officials said they were fairly sure another American would replace him.

Under a tacit understanding, the five permanent members of the Security Council — the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China — each hold an undersecretary-general's post.

Mr. Gouding became head of peacekeeping in 1986, succeeding Sir Brian Urquhart. A former British foreign service officer, he was his country's ambassador to Angola from 1983 to 1985. He also served as counsellor and head of chancery, the number three post, at Britain's mission to the United Nations.

In his new job he will be responsible for political affairs in Europe, Asia and Latin America.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Queen threatens to sue newspaper

LONDON (R) — Battle lines were drawn between the press and the pinnacles of British society when Queen Elizabeth threatened legal action against a newspaper which published her annual Christmas message two days early. The queen's move against the Sun newspaper Tuesday followed libel action by Prime Minister John Major last week against two magazines which recounted unsubstantiated rumours that he had an extramarital affair. A spokesman for the Sun said the daily had received a letter from the queen's lawyers saying court action would be taken for alleged breach of copyright unless cash damages and costs were paid within seven days. The tabloid Sun, which printed the queen's Christmas speech last Dec. 23, said it would contest the action. "We don't consider we did anything wrong. It was a good old-fashioned journalistic scoop, nothing more. No bugging, no stealing, no skulduggery," it said in an editorial in Wednesday's edition. A Buckingham Palace spokesman said: "We can confirm that the queen's solicitors sent a letter to the Sun on the question of copyright over the queen's Christmas broadcast."

CSCE discusses European spots

PRAGUE (R) — Senior officials of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) met in Prague Tuesday to discuss crisis spots in former Yugoslavia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The meeting was expected to review CSCE missions to such areas, as well as the activities of sanctions-monitoring missions, CSCE Secretariat official Pavel Vipler told Reuters. The secretariat is based in Prague. The meeting was also expected to seek ways of reducing tensions in the former Soviet Union, especially in Nagorno-Karabakh, Moldova and Georgia, coordinate the activities of the CSCE and United Nations, and discuss establishing the post of a CSCE secretary general. The three-day talks in the Czech Republic are the 19th session of the 52-nation top European Security Forum.

Aid to Armenia to pass through Turkey

ANKARA (R) — Turkey has given the green light for humanitarian aid to pass through its territory to energy-starved Armenia. Foreign Ministry sources said Tuesday. Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel told two Armenian envoys who visited Ankara this week that Turkey would permit food, medicine and fuel oil to reach Armenia, the sources said. Mr. Demirel told Gerard Libandian and David Shahnazaryan, advisers to Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan, that the assistance would not include goods that would bolster the Armenian war effort, the sources added. Fuel oil can power generators, but cannot be used as fuel for military vehicles. A blockade by Azerbaijan, fighting Armenians over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, has cut off supplies of energy and raw materials to Armenia, halting most economic life. Ethnic strife in neighbouring Georgia has sharply curtailed Armenia's gas intake, which was further hit by a pipeline explosion in Georgia last month. France, which has led efforts to mobilise humanitarian aid to Armenia, wants to ship fuel oil to Turkey's Black Sea port of Samsun for onward delivery by rail to Yerevan. It also wants to fly in 100 tonnes of food and medicine and send 600 tonnes of Red Cross parcels by train.

Hong Kong governor undergoes surgery

HONG KONG (R) — Doctors said Chris Patten faced no medical obstacle to remaining Hong Kong governor after a heart operation Wednesday, but his condition buoyed a share market hit by his controversial democratic reform plans. Prices on Hong Kong's stock exchange, hit recently by Mr. Patten's bitter row with China over his plans, rose in response to news of his illness — not the success of the treatment. Stock analysts, some apologising for sounding callous, said Mr. Patten's illness had increased confidence on a market where many investors accuse him of being too confrontational. "We do not envisage any problems for the governor to continue as a governor," Dr. E.K. Yeoh, the Queen Mary Hospital authority's director of operations, told a news conference after the operation to clear two narrowed heart arteries. Mr. Patten spent 2½ hours under local anaesthetic, with his wife Lavender at his side, as a balloon catheter was inserted into the arteries and inflated. He will stay in hospital for two to three days then rest at home for a week.

Bomb explodes on London train

LONDON (R) — Passengers fled a commuter train shortly before a bomb exploded Wednesday. London police said. No one was injured, but train services were disrupted. The train, from London's Victoria Station to Ramsgate in Kent, was stopped in south London and passengers evacuated. "It was put in a siding and there was a small explosion. No one was injured," a police spokesman said. Police said officials had been telephoned with a warning using a recognised code word, a frequent practice of Irish Republican Army (IRA) bombers. The IRA has set off a series of bombs in London in a bid to oust Britain from Northern Ireland, but police said no one had yet claimed responsibility for Wednesday's attack. Police said they did not know how many people were on the train. A British Rail spokesman said the number of passengers was "light".

Philippine volcano claims 30 lives

LEGAZPI, Philippines (R) — Philippine scientists said oozing lava from Mayon Volcano signalled a major eruption as the death toll from Tuesday's ash explosion rose to 30. A 100-metre wall of a gully near the crater of the mountain had collapsed, a sign that molten rock was being pushed close to the surface, scientists said Wednesday. A reddish glow could be seen on the crater of the 2,421-metre (7,940-foot) Mayon Mountain in central Albay province, famed around the world for its perfect cone shape. "What we are seeing are possibly precursors to a major eruption," chief government volcanologist Raymundo Punongbayan said in a radio interview.

Clinton letter used to woo Hanoi

HANOI (R) — An American businessman gave Vietnamese officials a letter written by Bill Clinton six weeks before he became U.S. president and told them it was an overture to improving relations. Foreign Ministry sources in Hanoi said. The letter, dated Dec. 9, introduces Clyde Pettit as "working for the eventual normalisation of relations between the United States and Vietnam." Mr. Clinton's transition team in Arkansas verified the authenticity of the letter to Reuters. It was written on letterhead titled "state of Arkansas, office of the governor" and signed Bill Clinton. The letter was addressed "to whom it may concern." The Vietnamese sources said Mr. Pettit described it to them as an important, indirect message from Mr. Clinton.

Taiwan party accepts premier's resignation

TAIPEI (R) — Taiwan's ruling Nationalist Party formally accepted the resignation of Premier Hau Pei-Tsun Wednesday, ending a bitter struggle between liberal and conservative factions over his fate. President Lee Teng-Hui, the party chairman, approved the resignations of Mr. Hau and his cabinet at a meeting of the Nationalists' Central Standing Committee. Mr. Hau, 73, a leader of the conservative faction, announced last Saturday he would quit to ease a political crisis that erupted after the Nationalists did poorly in parliamentary elections in December. "Today's situation is very satisfactory. I believe it will help to promote party unity," Chiu Chuang-Huan, a member of the Standing Committee, told reporters after the meeting.

Judge rejects delay in L.A. trial

LOS ANGELES (R) — A federal judge has rejected a last-minute bid to delay the trial of four white policemen accused of violating the civil rights of a black motorist in a beating that sparked outrage around the world. When the four were acquitted last April of most state charges from the videotaped beating of Rodney King, Los Angeles was engulfed in the worst riots to hit the United States this century. Fifty-three people were killed and nearly \$1 billion in property was damaged. U.S. District Judge John Davies Tuesday turned down a request for a postponement from Ira Salzman, attorney for Sergeant Stacey Koon.

COLUMN

Major says he misses privacy

LONDON (R) — British Prime Minister John Major said in an interview published Wednesday he missed the privacy he had before taking office. "I can do none of the things that most ordinary people take for granted — and I miss them," he told the Daily Express. "I cannot go out to a bookshop on my own. I cannot go for a walk around the streets. I cannot wander out to a restaurant," he said. But Mr. Major said he did not believe he was remote from the public. "I probably spend more time getting out and meeting people as any of my predecessors," he said. Mr. Major took over from Margaret Thatcher as prime minister more than two years ago.

Indian 'baby-god' draws crowds of devotees

NEW DELHI (R) — A 45-day-old baby with a long nose is drawing crowds of northern Indian villagers who believe the infant is an incarnation of the Hindu elephant-headed god Ganesha, news reports said Wednesday. Priests have been reciting prayers around the baby's decorated cradle in the courtyard of his parents' house in the Sikh holy city Amritsar, the United News of India (UNI) news agency said. Villagers, mostly women, make offerings and pray before the "child-god," it said. The baby has a long nose, no upper lip, and two protruding teeth somewhat like the tusks of an elephant, UNI said. Ganesha is widely revered as the Hindu god of wisdom. Legend says his father, the supreme god Shiva, chopped off Ganesha's head in a fit of anger, and afterwards grafted an elephant's head onto his son's body.

Lovebirds jailed for dining on illegal fowl

PEKING (R) — Peking police have jailed a former zookeeper and his girlfriend for stealing and eating three extremely rare birds from the city zoo, Xinhua News Agency said. Zhong Gang and his girlfriend Ma Dongmei were given five and three years in prison respectively for "killing and devouring" three yellow-breasted trogons, listed in China as a protected species. "Zhong and Ma stole the key of the courtyard holding the yellow-breasted trogons on the night of April 7 (1992). They beat the birds into unconsciousness and then took them away in a bag," Xinhua said. "The two culprits murdered the birds at Ma's house and cooked the birds later the same night." The agency said zookeepers found it extremely difficult to raise yellow-breasted trogons, brightly-coloured relatives of the pheasant identified by fleshy, horn-like protruberances on the head.

3 Chinese sisters become brothers

PEKING (AP) — Three Chinese sisters have undergone sex change operations at one of Peking's leading hospitals, the army daily reported Wednesday. The youngest, a 14-year-old, recently left Peking's 301 Hospital as a "handsome young man," the paper reported. Her two older sisters had been operated on earlier by the same surgeon, Professor Wang Xiaoxiong. The paper gave no details about the three girls from Henan province. Peking's 301 Hospital is where China's top leaders are treated. China's first sex change operation took place in 1984 at a time when sexual taboos were starting to crumble along with Communist ideology. Such operations are now publicised as a triumph of Chinese medical technique. Last year Chinese surgeons performed what was believed to be the world's first sex swap operation when a woman exchanged her ovaries for a man's testicles.

Dogs ordered to slow down in Spanish town

MADRID (R) — It's a dog's life in a Spanish town where the mayor has banned running in the street — even on four legs. Dogs as well as humans are affected by rules of behaviour on the street which the mayor's office in Ceberras, northwestern Spain, issued in a drive to control traffic and pedestrians. "Dogs can only circulate on the right hand side of the pavement, and only at a walking pace," one rule says. It was not clear what penalties offenders could face.

Russians mark 50th anniversary of Stalingrad

VOLGOGRAD, Russia (R) — Thousands of Russians marked the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Stalingrad in celebrations used by Kremlin leaders to appeal for unity in a new struggle against economic perils.

Veterans, their chests heavy with medals, gathered on the Mamayev-Kurgan Hill, scene of the bitterest and bloodiest fighting in the 200-day battle, to commemorate over a million Soviet dead.

Many were close to tears as they paid tribute to comrades who fell in one of the decisive battles of World War II. Some 30,000 had died on that strategic height alone.

Above them towered the "mother of the nation" — a gargantuan 80 metre high concrete and steel statue of a woman holding out a sword to the invader. Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi and German Ambassador Klaus Blech laid wreaths.

"In memory of people of many nations who lost their lives at Stalingrad," read the dedication on Mr. Blech's wreath.

The 800,000 killed in Adolf Hitler's armies at what is today Volgograd included many Romanians, Bulgarians, Italians and other nationals. Hitler ordered his troops to fight to the last drop of blood, but on Feb. 2, 1943, the remains of his prized 6th Army surrendered.

"Half a century ago, the Battle of Stalingrad, the fiercest and bloodiest battle of the second world war, ended...the conflict brought just victory for those defending their homeland and heavy defeat for those who attacked it," President Boris Yeltsin said in a message to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

"Russia and Germany are now on the path of final reconciliation...being great European



A boy examines the medals of a Russian World War II veteran during the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the battle for Stalingrad, now Volgograd. The battle is viewed as a turning point in the war (AFP photo).

powers they are capable of acting decisively so that the horrors of war recede for ever."

Mr. Kohl said in a message to Mr. Yeltsin:

"It is our duty to those who perished in Stalingrad, our duty to our own peoples and our neighbours, to make Europe a continent that has left behind its discords and conflicts and found peace."

Mr. Yeltsin's military adviser Lieutenant-General Dmitry Volkogonov, reflecting on Russia's current national decline, said the battle showed Russia can turn adversity into victory.

"Can we not do this today in this critical situation?" he asked in the Defence Ministry newspaper Krasnaya Zvezda.

"Everything can be decided by the will, the spirit and the historical memory of Russians."

"I am convinced that the historical significance of the victory on the Volga River can play an exceptionally important role in...leading the country out of crisis," he said.

Mr. Yeltsin also invoked the "spirit of Stalingrad" Monday to urge unity in the face of deep political and economic crisis.

"The difficulties, the deprivations will be overcome and we will triumph because behind us is Stalingrad" Mr. Yeltsin said.

The traditional official military parade favoured by past Communist rulers was eschewed although Defence Minister Pavel Grachev was present at celebrations.

Thousands of Cossacks, informal groups sporting tsarist-style military uniform, grey fur hats and dashing moustaches, marched along an embankment at the Volga River.

Fighter planes flew over the city in a salute after a minute's silence.

Modern-day Volgograd is plagued by the same deepening poverty and uncertainty that afflicts the whole country as market reforms take hold. Food prices have risen sharply. Unemployment threatens to grow through the new year.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and decline of Russia as a superpower — a status it won from the ruins of Stalingrad and, two years later, Berlin — has stirred feelings of national humiliation among many older people.

Stalingrad turned the tide of World War II, inflicting a crippling defeat on troops who had won a reputation for virtual invincibility. The Soviet victory denied Hitler access to rich Azerbaijani oil and opened the way for advance on Germany.